

A COMPLETE HARMONY

DANIEL AND THE APOCALYPSE.

By REV. J. LITCH.

"And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true. And the Lord said of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must be done with celerity."

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PREFACE.

IN no age of the world has the public mind been more universally interested in regard to impending events than at the present time. The prophetic Scriptures have received a larger share of attention than in any former period, and still the interest does not subside. The strangeness of the times — the universal spread of the gospel, the fall of the Roman government, the convulsions in the Roman church, the awaking of the nations of the east to the importance of western civilization; the terrible famines, floods, fires, earthquakes, cyclones, tidal waves, burning stars, spots on the sun's disk; the spread of infidelity, in its various forms and degrees, and many other strange phenomena — but adds fuel to the flame and enhances the interest.

The Protestant commentators of the past, in their interpretations of Daniel and John, have treated the prophetic periods as symbols, a day the representa-

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tive of a year of solar time; and, applying the visions of the two prophets very largely to the papacy, the periods were made mostly to refer to its times. The 1260 days, or years, as they were called, were variously begun; but the greater number of expositors dated them in A. D. 606, when to the pope was given the title of *universal bishop*, and thus ended them in A. D. 1866, at which time they expected the overthrow of Romanism and the introduction of the millennium. That date having passed by, and the papacy still existing in force, no millennium having come, and other estimates of times having also failed, the Christian world is afloat on a dangerous coast without her reckoning; and anxiously is the question asked, "Watchman, what of the night?"

The object of this work is to answer, partially at least, the question. We do not assume to be able to determine either the date of the beginning or of the ending of the prophetic periods; but we do endeavor to lay before our readers the outline of future events as laid down in the prophetic word, so that the attentive student of that word will, by observing passing events, be able to discern the signs of his own times. The work is not written in the interest of any de-

nomination, clique, or party, but for the interest of the whole Christian church.

The plan of interpretation is an entirely independent one, not attempting to follow any beaten track; although, on many points, others have held and taught the same views. So far as the general outlines of the historical prophecies of Daniel are concerned, we are in perfect accord with all the standard commentators, such as Bishop Newton, Sir Isaac Newton, Dr. A. Clarke, Scott, Rollin in his "Ancient History," and a multitude of others. But in reference to the "ten horns," and the "little horn" of the seventh and eighth chapters, we entirely dissent from their views. In our interpretation of the eleventh of Daniel, we know of no expositor from whom we differ on the first twelve verses. From that point we disagree with all with whose views we have ever met. In the interpretation of the Apocalypse we have pursued, in many respects, nearly an unbeaten track; although we have found many excellent and valuable suggestions in various works. In this connection we refer with pleasure especially to Dr. Siess' eloquent and instructive "Lectures on the Apocalypse," published by Smith & English, Philadelphia; and to the "Critical Com-

mentatory" on Daniel and Revelation, by Rev. Mr. Faucett, a minister of the church of England; also to Benjamin Wills Newton's "Thoughts on the Apocalypse," from which we have derived many important suggestions. The one question which has been kept before us in this work has been, What is the plain grammatical and obvious import of the text or passage under consideration? How will this view agree with the history of the past, and will it produce a harmony throughout the prophetic Scriptures? We do not depend on the opinions of men, but for the correctness of our interpretations appeal to the harmony of the entire word of God which our plan affords. We only ask acceptance of these views as they shall be found to have produced that result. We discard for ourselves all theories and systems which produce conflict of one scripture or historical fact with another, believing that a true system will produce harmony, and that no other will do so. "Information is the groundwork of judgment." Read and then judge.

That the visions of Daniel and John are full of symbolical representations is conceded by all expositors. How, then, are they to be interpreted? The laws by which we have been governed are these:—

1. The most important symbols are divinely interpreted, as when Daniel said to the king of Babylon, "Thou art this head of gold;" or as when Christ said to John (Rev. i. 20), "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches; and the seven candlesticks are the seven churches." This is an end of controversy. All symbols thus rendered by divine authority need no further interpretation.

2. Most symbols not so interpreted represent their own species; as in the seventh of Daniel, the "Ancient of Days" and "Son of Man" represent God the Father and Christ the Son, and need no interpretation. And in all cases where it is not contrary to the nature of things, and no interpretation is given to a symbol, it is to be understood as representing its own species, and nothing else.

3. Where a symbol is contrary to nature, and yet no interpretation is given, its meaning must be unfolded by reference to parallel passages; as, for instance, the woman of Rev. xii.

In the interpretation of the eleventh of Daniel, we have been compelled to depart from the beaten track of all ages, from verse 13 to 30 especially. If anything has been regarded as fixed by nearly all expositors

tors in all ages, it was that Antiochus the Great was the subject of the prophecy from verse 10 to 19; that his son Seleucus was the subject of verse 20, and his younger son, Antiochus Epiphanes, of verses 21 to 30. To reject this is to revolutionize all former expositions. But we have shown that history and that theory are discordant, and therefore it must be rejected, and a new one sought. That new one, we believe, we have found and given in its place, and have shown its correctness by its entire harmony with the history of the past and predictions of the future. Whoever shall undertake to overthrow or refute our positions, must meet us at that point; for it is the pivot on which the whole system turns.

If correct there, the old theory is destroyed and the new is established, and prophecy is simplified and made plain. If wrong there, the whole theory falls to the ground; for, aside from these two, there is no other which can fill the interregnum.

There is one which obtains to a limited extent, but is entirely wrong. It is, 1. That Julius Cæsar was the "king of the north" of verse 19; 2. That Augustus Cæsar was the "raiser of taxes" of verse 20; 3. That Tiberius Cæsar was the "vile person" of

verse 21. To this it is replied, 1. That Julius Cæsar never was "king of the north;" neither did he start for home and not reach there. He did reach home in triumph. 2. The raiser of taxes was to be destroyed in a "few days;" but Augustus Cæsar reigned forty-four years. 3. Of the vile person it is said, "They shall not give him the honor of the kingdom;" but Augustus did give it to Tiberius. So that the whole theory is utterly baseless in fact, and falls to the ground.

We invite the most careful criticism of the passage, being fully persuaded that the more it is considered and discussed, the more firmly it will be established. But while we are persuaded that we present a more perfect harmony than has before been given, we are very far from supposing that we have exhausted the subject; but we lay the result of more than forty years' study before our readers, as suggestive of *thought*, and to excite further research in the same direction.

The prevailing theory of a double fulfillment of prophecy we totally discard. A prediction, if once fully accomplished, needs no second fulfillment. Of it we may say, "Thus it is written," and "Thus it has

been fulfilled." But if it has only some features of *seeming* fulfillment, it is no fulfillment at all, and we mistake if we call it a fulfillment. As an illustration we refer to the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, which is usually regarded as a double prophecy, referring first to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and secondly to the second coming of Christ, when it shall have a more perfect accomplishment. If it was fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem, why look for another accomplishment? If it was not fulfilled at that time, it is not a prediction of that event.

Another prophecy (Dan. xi. 21-45) is frequently treated in the same manner, as relating, first, to Antiochus Epiphanes; and then, finding it impossible to make the facts of his history correspond with the predictions concerning this character, it is referred to a future Antichrist for a more perfect fulfillment. If he filled the terms of the prophecy, why refer it to a future character? If he did not fulfill it, why refer it to him at all? Why not, as we do in this work, refer the whole prophecy to that future Antichrist?

We freely admit that there was a striking parallel, to a certain extent, between Antiochus Epiphanes,

and the "vile person," but not so full or perfect as to amount to a fulfillment. Hence it should never be so termed; but it may be called a partial parallel, and a partial illustration of the prediction. Antiochus Epiphanes was "king of the north;" so will be the subject of the prophecy. Antiochus invaded Egypt; so will this person do. Antiochus took Jerusalem, took away the sacrifices of the temple, and set up an idol as an object of worship, and polluted the temple of God; so also will the "vile person" do in his day.

But the manner of their coming to the throne will differ entirely; and there are a variety of incidents related in the latter part of the chapter which the favorers of the Antiochian theory have never been able to prove to have been fulfilled by him. And even Dr. Cowles finds it much easier to pass over in silence the most of those predictions than to undertake to show their fulfillment by Antiochus; while the great body of the advocates of that theory frankly confess their inability to show their accomplishment in his history, and refer it to the future to complete the testimony. Aside from these, there is another difficulty, even more insuperable than the others. It is this: it is impossible to show from his-

tory the fulfillment of the *prophetic times*, in his career, as those times will be fulfilled by the vile person in his days. It will be seen in our remarks connected with the *periods* in Daniel, that we have no confidence whatever in the "year day theory," as it is called, and regard all *prophetic periods* as meaning literally just what the words express. The reference to the forty days of the spies of Israel in spying out the land and the appointment of one year of wandering in the wilderness for each day (Numb. xiv. 34) does not establish the rule. This was a specific arrangement which the Lord adopted for that occasion, and has no reference to anything else. It affords no rule whatever for the interpretation of prophetic times in general. The prediction of the time, "forty years," is positive in verse 33, and then, in verse 34, the Lord tells them why he fixed that time: a year of wandering for a day of unbelief.

The same is true concerning Ezek. iv. 4-6, where the prophet was directed to lie three hundred and ninety days upon his left side to bear the iniquity of the house of Israel that number of years, and forty days on his right side to bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty years. The days in each case

were typical only by a special divine appointment, and constituted no rule for general application to prophetic periods. We therefore utterly repudiate the principle, and adopt the literal sense of the periods."

Our views of the judgment will perhaps appear new to many, and, unless a few words of explanation are here given, may appear somewhat confused. We believe the judgment to be twofold, the *judicial* and the *executive*. The former is the work of God the Father, and the latter the work of the Son. When the judgment scene is presented in vision to Daniel, chapter vii., it is God the Father who sits upon the throne, and before whom the books are opened. Before him the Son of man is brought to receive his kingdom. So also in Rev. xx., when the white throne appears, and the books are opened, it is the Father who presides.

But it is the prerogative of the Son "to EXECUTE judgment, because he is the Son of man." (John v. 27.) So likewise Enoch, the seventh from Adam *prophesied*, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to EXECUTE judgment upon all." (Jude.)

The resurrection is an *executive* proceeding; for

the good are to come forth to the resurrection of life, and the wicked to the resurrection of damnation. Therefore the *trial* or *judicial* work must precede the *executive*, and hence also the advent of Christ, who comes to *execute judgment*. The *judicial* proceedings will be held in heaven, and be *executed* on earth.

It is the dead who *live in spirit*, as well as the *living in the flesh*, who will be put on trial when the books are opened before God. (1 Pet. iv. 5, 6.) "Who shall give account to him who is ready to judge the quick and the dead. For for this cause the gospel was preached to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to, or in the same manner as, men in the flesh; but live in the manner of God in spirit."

It has been our object to make plain to the comprehension of the reader the import of each passage of Scripture considered, with little attempt at elaboration.

If this object has been attained, we are content to leave our work to make its way among those sincerely desiring to know and be sanctified through the truth.

To those who may think we make the times in

which we live too definite, and bring the end too near, we can only say that we leave the times just where God in his word leaves them, and no words or constructions of ours can defer the appointed end. It will come in God's own time.

To those who may complain that we are putting too many events between us and the coming of the Master, we reply that the same complaint may be made against Jesus and his apostles. They certainly placed many things between them and the Second Advent, and yet exhorted us to constant watchfulness lest it come upon us unawares. We know of no better position to occupy than that which they taught. No opinions or teachings of ours will either hasten or retard the event. Hence our single object has been, to learn the mind of the Spirit, by hearing what He saith to the churches in the prophetic word.

If it is true, as it certainly is, that the Roman government, "the fourth kingdom on earth," as presented in Daniel's vision of chapter seven, has ceased to exist, and the fragmentary state of the old empire is where the power now lies, then it follows that the end is upon us, and no words of ours can

make it otherwise. And to this result all the foretold signs given in the word of God seem with unerring aim to point.

With fervent prayer that our work may be made a blessing, we now cast it as "bread upon the waters," trusting to the promise of gathering the result "after many days."

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NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM.

DANIEL, CHAPTER II.

IN the consideration of the Apocalypse of St. John, we are necessarily compelled to make frequent reference to the prophecies of Daniel, as the two books are so intimately connected that it is impossible to fully understand the one without reference to the other. The one is the *sealed* book, the other the *unsealed*; the one, the first step taken in setting forth the course of time, the rise and fall of earth's empires, down to the day of judgment, and the introduction of God's everlasting kingdom, yet leaving many mysteries connected with that era unsolved, ready for a revelation or unsealing, in the "time of the end;" while the other, the Apocalypse, affords a revelation of those mysteries relating to the great day of the Lord, detailing more minutely the events briefly described in Daniel, the order of their occurrence, and their relation one to the other.

It is clear, then, that in order to present a full view of the prophetic word, it is needful to give a summary of the visions of Daniel, setting forth as

clearly, and yet as briefly as may be, the teachings of the book. In doing so we shall pass over its purely historical portions with slight reference, and take into consideration only those parts in which the prophet has given, as it were, a "bird's-eye view" of the history of the world from the days of Nebuchadnezzar down to the incoming of earth's future and everlasting King.

THE METALLIC IMAGE.

In the second chapter of Daniel we have an account of a dream by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, which, he having forgotten, was related and interpreted to him by Daniel, a Hebrew captive in his court.

The dream related to a great image, whose head was of gold; his breast and arms of silver; his belly and thighs of brass; his legs of iron; his feet and toes of iron and clay intermingled, yet unadherent.

This image came to a violent end: while yet standing upon its feet, a stone cut from a mountain *without hands*—that is, by divine power—smote it on its feet and toes first, and brake them in pieces. "Then was the iron, clay, brass, silver, and gold broken in pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer's threshing-floor, and the wind carried them away, and no place was found for them." Thus, with violence, it will be remarked, was the image smitten,

and disappeared, not, as it is frequently said, "by the rolling of the stone aggregating to itself the elements of the image," but by their crushing and dissipation, "so that no place was found for them." "And (then) the stone which smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."

THE INTERPRETATION.

The prophet, in addressing the king, then said, —

1. "Thou, O king, art a king of kings; the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, and power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field, or the fowls of heaven, he hath given into thy hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. *Thou art this head of gold.*

2. "After thee shall arise another kingdom, inferior to thee." This, all commentators in the light of incontrovertible history, are agreed, was the *Medo-Persian* kingdom. an account of whose accession to the dominion is given by Daniel himself, in the fifth chapter of the book.

3. "And another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth." This, it is equally certain, as admitted by all, was the Grecian kingdom established by Alexander the Great, who conquered and subdued the *Medo-Persian*, and on its ruins erected his own throne.

4. "The fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron;

forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and bruiseth all these, it shall break in pieces and bruise." How completely these peculiarities, as here described, are fulfilled in the Roman kingdom, all who are at all familiar with its history will at once perceive and bear witness. Its strength, its fierceness, its adamantine hardness, and the terrible power of the blows it struck at opposing nations, well fit it for the descriptive term, the "Iron kingdom."

6. "And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men; but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay." This was the Roman imperial dominion, at first, under the reign of the emperors, a unit, but in the fourth century divided into two parts, Eastern and Western Rome (the capital of the eastern division being at Constantinople, and that of the western at Rome), and afterwards divided into the kingdoms of Europe. Besides this, there seems to be implied in the mixture of iron and clay in the feet and toes, a degeneracy of that absolute imperial power granted

first to Babylon, then to Medo-Persia, then to Grecia, and lastly to Rome (in each instance, as students of history will observe, a gradual lessening of that absolute imperialism characterizing the first dominion granted to Nebuchadnezzar), until this degeneracy results in a mixture of democracy and monarchy,—in other words, in limited monarchies, where the power of the king is restrained by legislative bodies elected by the people, as witnessed to day in Europe.

6. The toes are understood to represent the same kingdoms as the horns of the beast, in Dan. vii. and Rev. xiii.; and that they are the last phase of the fourth kingdom, and will exist until God's everlasting kingdom shall come to destroy them. The central Roman government having now disappeared, the decem regal state is the next in order, and the whole Roman empire, from the Euphrates to the Atlantic, will be divided into ten kingdoms, represented by the ten toes. The period in which we live is the formative period of those kingdoms. Their development is the next prophetic event.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

7. Said the prophet, "In the days of these kings the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; it shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."

This kingdom is the one of which Jesus Christ shall be the supreme and everlasting head; when, as we read in the seventy-second Psalm, "His dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth." His kingdom will be as real, material, and personal, as that of either of the four kingdoms which have preceded it, lacking, of course, the corruptibility and shame of earth's present fallen condition; for all things shall be made new, and the groans of earth and the sighs of the saints shall be exchanged for the songs of a re-created and glorious heavens and earth, wherein the righteous shall dwell. He is to come in person from heaven to accomplish this; and this kingdom which he comes to establish will be shared alike by his saints, the living and the dead; for "the dead shall then be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Thus, in that immortal state and new earth, Christ with his saints "shall reign forever and ever." We now pass from this brief consideration of this remarkable revelation of earth's history to the seventh chapter of Daniel, a chapter setting forth the same events, revealed more fully, and under different symbols.

DANIEL'S VISION.

CHAPTER VII.

THE prophet having been inspired to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream, was afterwards permitted to see visions of his own, which, as we have already intimated, covered the same ground, but entered more into detail as to the closing portions of the great drama.

THE FOUR BEASTS.

The vision represented four great beasts. The first, that he saw, coming up from the great sea, "was like a lion," and had wings; and he "beheld until the wings were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and a man's heart was given to it."

The second beast "was like a bear, and it raised itself up on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it; and they said thus unto it: Arise, devour much flesh."

The third beast was "like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; and the

beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it."

The fourth beast was unlike all others, "dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth" "and nails of brass;" "it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it; and it had ten horns. I considered the horns, and behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things." This wonderful vision which had been granted to the prophet was of such a character as served to excite great anxiety in his mind as to its meaning; and we read, "I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me to know the interpretation of the things. These great beasts, which are four, are four kings which shall arise out of the earth." These words seemed to satisfy his mind, as they were undoubtedly connected with the interpretation of the dream of Nebuchadnezzar,—in which he saw four great kingdoms of earth symbolized by the gold, silver, brass, and iron; and so he understood the first beast to symbolize Babylon, the second Medo-Persia, the third Grecia. The mystery of the fourth beast, however, with its many peculiarities, he could or did not understand; and so he said, "I would know the

truth of the fourth beast, and of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell ; even of that horn which had eyes, and a mouth that spake very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows." In the explanation which follows, that the fourth beast shall be "the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down and break it in pieces," we have a symbol representing the *entire* Roman government, not only *pagan*, but also *papal*, covering the time from the commencement of Roman ascendancy in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, and fall of Macedon, down to the downfall of the Pope of Rome from his temporal sovereignty in 1870. The ten horns are ten kings yet to come, as already intimated in the explanation of the second chapter.

THE LITTLE HORN.

This little horn, concerning whom Daniel's instructor said, "And another shall arise after them (the ten horns), and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws," is a new feature of the four kingdoms, not introduced in the dream of the king, but kept in view in all subsequent visions of Daniel and John ;

and it is indeed the most important agent of all the series. The others seem only to have been introduced in order to give his genealogy and times. He is the *little horn* of chapter viii. He is the *covenant*, *confirmer* of Dan. ix. 27. He is the *vile person* of xi. 21-45. He is the one who sets the *abomination of desolation* in the holy place of Matt. xxiv. 15. He is the *man of sin* of 2 Thess. ii. He is the *Antichrist* of 1 John ii. and iv. He is the *crowned conqueror* of Rev. vi. 2. He is the *beast* of Rev. xiii. and xvii.

THE TIME OF THE HORN'S REIGN.

This occurs during the session of the judgment. This is rendered evident by verses 9-11 of this chapter: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame." The casting down of thrones of verse 9 is not in the sense of overthrowing the kingdoms, but in that of the setting or

putting in position the thrones of the court-room, for occupaney of the judges ; and on which the ANCIENT OF DAYS takes his seat, surrounded with his associates, the twenty-four elders and four living ones, as described in the fourth chapter of Revelation.

Being thus enthroned for judgment, the books, by the testimony of which the world is to be judged, are opened before the court.

"I beheld then because of the great words which the horn spake:" clearly, then, his great words are during this session of the judgment. All his persecutions of the saints are during this session, as we read, "I beheld and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the MOST HIGH. And the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." (v. 21, 22.)

The *sitting* of the Ancient of days in judgment, as described in verse 9, and the *coming* of the Ancient of days of verse 22, are two entirely distinct events. The judgment session is to be in *heaven*, *invisible* to us on earth ; while the *coming* of the Ancient of days will be visible to all the race. The former scene is described in Rev., chapters iv. and v., where God, as the Great Judge, is represented as taking his seat, with the elders and living creatures surrounding his throne as associates in the judgment, and pronouncing the Lamb worthy to execute the judgments of the

court upon the earth. The latter scene, in Rev. vi. 12-17, where amid mighty convulsions of nature, and the rolling together of the heavens like a scroll, the wonderful vision of the divine court appears to the consternation and terror of the wicked inhabitants of the earth. This scene being identical with "the sign of the Son of Man in heaven," as predicted by Christ in Matt. xxiv. 30. This vision of the Ancient of days *limits* the period of the persecution of the saints of the Most High by the little horn, although *not* the time of his *reign* — the entire time of his war against the saints covering a period of three years and a half, or, in other words, twelve hundred and ninety literal days.

THE PARTING ASUNDER OF THE TIMES.

Esdras, in the Apocrypha, tells us that he inquired of the angel who instructed him, "What shall be the parting asunder of the times?" or what shall be the end of this world, and the beginning of that which is to come? He was told that there would be none; that they would *lap over*. It will be at the *close* of this dispensation as it was at its *commencement*. There is no one point at which it can be said, "Here the Mosaic dispensation closed and the Christian began;" for there was a gradual closing of the one and introduction of the other. Christ was born, he was baptized, he was anointed with the Holy Ghost, he began his ministry. At none of these points could it

he said, the old is closed, and the new dispensation begun; and so it may be said of a variety of other points in its progress. So will it be at the close of this dispensation and the introduction of the eternal state. The judgment will sit in heaven, and this world, to use the illustration, be put in chancery for the adjudication of all its interests, national, social, and personal. At a certain point after this session begins, as already remarked, the court will be exhibited mid heaven to all the inhabitants of earth. There will be developed various judgments on the earth. Thus the time *will come* "that judgment must begin at the house of God." Christians will then be tried, purified, and made white; as though during the years of waiting they had contracted many of the impurities of earth — the weakness and impatience of an imperfect faith, and the slothfulness of servants long disappointed in waiting the return of an absent Lord, and needing a purification, an enlivening, a quickening, ere they can be ready to meet him in peace, although it must be in contrition. So they are tried and purified, in the words of the apostle, in hope of a salvation "wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus

Christ." (1 Peter i. 6, 7.) After this will follow judgments on the wicked, and the blood of the saints will be avenged. Nations will be judged and punished.

Under the *seventh trumpet* will come "the time of the *dead* that they should be judged." (Rev. xi. 18.) That accomplished, the resurrection will follow, and the reward be given to all of God's servants. The scene introduced in Dan. vii. 9, 10, is the beginning of this process, and the generation then living will witness the grand and yet awful climax — the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE TEN KINGDOMS.

As will have been remarked in our consideration of Dan. ii., the various parts of the image succeeded each other. So also when the same governments were symbolized by the four beasts, the one followed the other. Then why not the *toes* follow the *feet* of the image? Why not the *ten horns* follow the reign of the beast? The fourth beast of Dan. vii. had ten horns. Why not look for them to exist and reign after the beast has lost its power? In the case of the third beast it will be observed that the beast had his reign first; then upon his downfall came the four divisions symbolized by the four heads. Now, if the fourth beast represented the Roman empire, it has disappeared, and only the fragmentary parts remain. Why not look for the development of the ten to reign

contemporaneously? Not one of the *ten kings* who came into power in the fifth and six centuries remains in existence. But the *ten kings* are to exist in the end, and make war on the Lamb, and be overcome by him. (Rev. xvii. 14.) Then they certainly are to be looked for in the future. But how long will be their formative period? It may not be possible to fully determine that point. But when four horns were to spring up in the place of the one great horn of the goat, of Daniel, eighth chapter, it was a period in the neighborhood of twenty years from the death of Alexander, before the *four kingdoms* were fully established. Why, then, should it not be a period of years before the ten kings shall be organized and the other *little horn* come up among them?

But, in any case, all these points are under the direction of a divine Providence, and he will accomplish them in their proper time, and any hurry of spirit on our part, in a desire for the epiphany of our Lord, can make no change in our Father's plans, which are wisely ordered, and will be consummated with infinite skill. Our wisdom, therefore, is to watch and pray always, and be ready for all events which may come to pass, escape the evils of the closing times, and be accounted worthy to stand before the Son of man.

THE CHARACTER OF THE LITTLE HORN.

Does the little horn of the fourth beast (Dan. vii.) represent the pope or the papacy? This is a question on which there is a great deal depending; a question which is answered in the affirmative by the larger mass of Bible expositors. But we answer, it does not.

1. The little horn is to come up after and among the ten. But the ten kings have not yet come up, and therefore the papacy which came into power more than a thousand years ago, cannot meet the requirements of the prophecy.

2. The times of the little horn are to be three and a half years. But the times of the papacy have been more than a *thousand* years.

But do not the time, times, and the dividing of a time mean 1260 years, each day of the period representing a year? There is no shadow of ground for supposing they do, or that the word day, in prophecy, means a year. The first occurrence of the phrase "*times*" as a prophetic period is in the fourth of Daniel, the *seven times*, during which Nebuchadnezzar was driven from among men. That period was fulfilled in *seven literal years*; and there is no intimation in connection with the occurrence of the word time, or times, that it is used in any different sense from that. No period expressed in times, months, or days,

can be shown to have had its fulfillment on that principle. The seventy weeks of Dan. ix. is a period by itself, consisting of a week of years, for there was such a period among the Jews, as literally as a week of days, and therefore can constitute no rule for any other designation of time. A time, therefore, means a year, and no more; a month signifies a month, and no more; nor does a day signify anything more than just what it expresses—a period of twenty-four hours.

The adoption of the *year-day theory*, as it is called, has been the great stumbling-block in the way of a correct interpretation of prophecy for these hundreds of years, and should be utterly repudiated by all lovers of the simple truth. The time, times, and the dividing of a time has never been fulfilled in papal history; and hence we look for another. There have been many periods, in the history of the papacy, set for their ending by various commentators. Thus Bengel and John Wesley have advanced labored arguments to show that the period in question would reach its end in the year of our Lord 1836—an opinion which the lapse of time has shown to be erroneous.

The plan of several able students of prophecy in Europe for beginning them in A. D. 533, and ending in 1793, also failed. For according to Dan. vii. the little horn is to make war with the saints and prevail against them during that period, that is, during the 1260 days. But said Daniel, "I beheld, and the same

horn made war on the saints, and prevailed against them, *until* the Ancient of days came." The Ancient of days did not come either in 1793 or in 1798, (the period at which the Adventists held that the days ended), and he has not yet come; therefore the period has not yet ended. There is no date for the 1260 years of papal rule which will carry them into the future, except 756, when Pepin made the pope a temporal sovereign; and that would carry us to A. D. 2015 for their ending, that is, to the end of the temporal power of the pope. But the pope lost that temporal power in September, 1870, and now possesses no power by which he can make war on the saints; and yet the Ancient of days has not come, nor do the saints possess the kingdom.

The year-day theory, as it is called, on which alone the theory that the pope or papacy is the little horn of Dan. vii. rests, falls to the ground, and some other application must be found. For if the times of Dan. vii. do not fit the pope, taken either as literal years or as symbolical periods, meaning 1260 years (and we have shown that they do not), then he is not that little horn.

All *interpretations* of symbols are given in literal language, not in language more mysterious than the symbol itself. Now, be it marked, the periods of Dan. vii. and viii. are not symbols seen by the prophet, but interpretations of symbols; and therefore their statements are to be literally understood. Daniel

inquired of the explaining angel the meaning of the fourth beast. He said, "The fourth kingdom upon the earth." What is the meaning of "the ten horns upon his head"? "Ten kings that shall arise," said the angel. "The other which came up, before whom three fell?" "Another, which shall rise up after them (the ten horns), and shall wear out the saints, and think to change times and laws, and they shall be given into his hand until a time, times, and the dividing of a time. But the judgment shall have sat [see *Septuagint*], and they shall take away his dominion," &c. It will thus be seen that the time is not a symbol, but the plain statement of a *literal period* — three and a half years, or twelve hundred and sixty days.

So, also, the twenty-three hundred days of Dan. viii. 14 are given in explanation of the previous symbols, and, as an explanation, can not be symbolical.

The three periods of Dan. xii. are not symbols, but plain literal statements of times, and we have no authority for making them anything else. Let us now leave this portion of the book, and proceed to examine

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RAM AND THE GOAT.

The vision of Dan. viii. being given under the reign of the last Chaldean king, it did not, like the former two, embrace that kingdom, but commenced

with that which was to follow. The Lord made up for the deficiency in symbolical representation by sending Gabriel to state in plain terms the import of the symbols, so that nothing was left to conjecture. The symbols were, —

1. A powerful ram with two horns.
2. A rough he-goat with a great horn between his eyes, coming with a bound from the west against the ram, whom he overcame.
3. His great horn was broken, and four notable ones took its place, toward the four winds of heaven.
4. Out of one of these four came a little horn, which waxed exceeding great, toward the south, the east, and the pleasant land.

THE DOINGS OF THIS LITTLE HORN.

1. He waxed great to the host of heaven, i. e., the people of God.
2. It cast down some of the host and of the stars, (i. e., ministers of God) to the ground, and stamped upon them.
3. He magnified himself even to the prince of the host — the Messiah.
4. By him was the daily sacrifice taken away.
5. "The place of his sanctuary was cast down."
6. "A host," or an army "was given him against the daily sacrifice" by the instrumentality of which he accomplishes its suppression.

7. "It cast down the truth to the ground, and it practiced and prospered."

From this it will be seen that this little horn is the most important character of the whole vision. And it is to introduce him, and state his times and work, for which the other parts of the vision were given. Thus we have light upon light thrown upon our pathway. First, simply the general outlines of earth's history from the days of Nebuchadnezzar to the introduction of the everlasting kingdom of the Son of God; secondly, in the seventh chapter the same general course of events, with added revelations as to the scenes of the latter days, revealing now, for the first time, the rise and work of the little horn, together with his destruction by the brightness of Christ's coming; and thirdly, the present chapter, revealing the division of the then future empire of the fourth beast of Dan. vii. from which the little horn was to arise, viz., one of the four divisions of the Alexandrian kingdom; adding thereto such descriptions of his power, times and work, as afford to us material help in our investigation of his career.

THE PERIOD OF HIS WORK.

This period does not embrace anything but the little horn and his doings. It does not go back to the doings of the ram, the goat, or their horns: nothing but the little horn is covered by it.

The time is drawn out by a question asked by one holy one of another holy one — "how long the vision."

1. "Concerning the daily sacrifice?" for it is by this little horn the daily sacrifice is to be taken away, and its sanctuary cast down.

2. Concerning "the transgression of desolation;" for it is this little horn who is to set up the *abomination of desolation* in place of the *daily sacrifice*.

3. "To give both the sanctuary and the host to be trodden under foot;" for the little horn is to tread these under foot. All this implies the restoration of the Jews under Antichrist; the restoration of the daily temple service in Jerusalem; its being taken away by Antichrist, and the abomination (his image) set up by him in the most holy place. (Chap. xi. 37.)

THE ANGEL'S ANSWER.

"And he said unto me, Unto twenty-three hundred days: then shall the sanctuary [that is, the temple polluted by Antichrist] be cleansed."

These twenty-three hundred days have been long regarded as years, and have been dated back to the days of the Medo-Persian kings; mostly to the times of Artaxerxes Longimanus. But if they date back at all, they cover the entire vision of the ram and his two horns, *Media and Persia*. The subject, it is clear, will not admit of anything else. "How long the

vision?" If accepted in this absolute form, it goes back to Media, B. C. 538, at least, for its date. And if so, and they are twenty-three hundred years, they must have ended in A. D. 1762; which they did not. But if the question, "How long shall be the vision?" is to be modified, it must be done as our translators have done it: "*concerning the daily sacrifice,*" &c. This at once restricts the period to the times and doings of the little horn.

The question now confronts us, *Is the government of pagan Rome the little horn?* We reply without hesitation, it is not; for that government existed four hundred years before Alexander the Great, and therefore could not come out of one of the divisions of his kingdom. It *conquered* each of those divisions, and *therefore* could *not* come out of either.

But it may be still inquired, *Is not the papacy the little horn?* As before, the answer is, no. For although the papacy was the successor of pagan Rome, the conqueror of each of those four divisions of Alexander's empire, yet it did not come out of either of the four Grecian kingdoms, but grew up in the west, where Alexander never reigned, and in parts which never belonged to his dominion. Besides, if *papal Rome* were the little horn, and the times twenty-three hundred years, as the papacy did not come into power before the times of Justinian, Emperor of Constantinople, say A. D. 533, it would carry us to A. D. 2833 for their

end; but the papal government ended in A. D. 1870. The same may be said of Mahomedism, except that it would carry us much further into futurity than the papacy would; for it can not be dated earlier than A. D. 606.

THE ERA OF THE LITTLE HORN.

While standing in perplexity, — not knowing what to think of the vision, Gabriel was commissioned to reveal to the prophet its meaning. His first point of instruction related to the era of the vision (v. 17:) "Understand, O son of man, for at the time of the end shall be the vision." This time of the end is referred to several times in chapters xi, and xii. and seems to be a period devoted to the closing up of this dispensation. It is especially introduced in the eleventh chapter and fortieth verse, when a "king of the north," Syria, is in full tide of success. "*At the time of the end, the king of the south shall push at him,*" i. e., the king of the north, "*and the king of the north shall come against him [the king of the south] like a whirlwind.*" The king of the north was one of the four horns of the goat. This man there acting "*at the time of the end,*" is that little horn, as we shall see when we come to the consideration of v. 31 of chapter xi.; for he by his army *takes away the daily sacrifice.*

The time of the end, then, being the era of his life, we next shall strive to ascertain whether it corre-

sponds with the further revelation of his times (verses 20-23): "The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia. The rough goat is the king of Grecia" (Hebrew *Javan*). The great horn that is between his eyes is the first king. "Now, that being broken, whereas four stood up for it, four kingdoms shall stand up out of that nation, but not in his power. And in the last time [the rendering of Professor N. N. Whiting] of their kingdom," thus implying that they will have more than one time of reigning (here allowing an interval for the Roman supremacy); and that this little horn will come up in that "last time;" "a king of fierce countenance and understanding dark sentences shall stand up. His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power." It will be by the power of the arch-enemy — the devil, who will give "him his power, and his throne, and great authority." (Rev. xiii.) "He shall destroy wonderfully, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people." This is what the little horn of chapter vii. and the beast of Rev. xiii. are to do. Then they are identical. "He shall stand up against the prince of princes." Thus his character as an opposer of Christ, the prince of Princes, and Lord of lords, is rendered certain; and he is thus evidently the Antichrist, who will resist Christ's assumption of the kingdom. But "he shall be broken without hand," that is, by divine power, — "whom the Lord shall consume with the

spirit of his mouth, and destroy by the brightness of his coming." (2-Thess. ii.)

The four horns, or kingdoms of the *Javanites*, or Grecians, were all established within twenty years of the death of Alexander the Great. They were Syria, Egypt, Thraco, and Macedon. But they fell, the last of them, Egypt, losing its royal power, B. C. 30; and neither of them have ever yet recovered it, except modern Greece, a branch of Macedon.

The Turkish provinces are now struggling for independence, not yet in arms, it is true, but none the less in reality; and on the fall of the sultan's empire, their present enslaver, they will undoubtedly obtain that which they desire, and for which they are struggling, and thus have that *last time* of reigning, spoken of in this chapter. During this *last time*, the little horn will come up and complete the series of earthly empires, and it in turn will be compelled to give place to the Son of God.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SEVENTY WEEKS.

In the eighth chapter and last verse, the prophet informs us of the effect of his vision both on his health and mind. "I was sick certain days;" "I was astonished at the vision, but none understood it." He next set himself to seek that being who

in his hours of perplexity had always listened to his earnest prayers, and afforded him the relief asked (see Dan. ii. 16-23) in reference to his people and city, the Jews, and Jerusalem; and after humbling himself before God with confession and prayer, God heard and answered him, sending Gabriel again, who said, "I am now come to give thee skill and understanding. Therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision." Then he told him of the seventy weeks which were appointed upon his people and city, Jerusalem and the Jews, "to finish the transgression" of the nation, "to make an end of sins;" "to make reconciliation for iniquity," by the true offering of Messiah, and thus "to bring in an everlasting righteousness," for ever superseding the remembrance of sins again every year; "to seal the vision and prophet,"—thus stamping them as truly inspired—"and to anoint the holy of holies."

This is the last event of the seventy weeks, and at the latest ended on the day of pentecost, when the "most holy place" in heaven was consecrated by the entrance of our Great High Priest, and his reception of the Holy Ghost with which to baptize his waiting church; the full antitype of the anointing oil of the sanctuary. Then, as already remarked, ended the seventy weeks.

The next question for our consideration is, Where did they begin? About this it seems that there can

be no doubt, for the Scriptures themselves fix the period — a period commencing with the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem. This period we have recorded in Ezra vii. as being in the seventh year of Artaxerxes, king of Persia, B. C. 457:—"Know, therefore, and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem, unto Messiah the prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks." These two periods, sixty-two and seven, are together sixty-nine weeks. As we have remarked above, the law as truly provided for a week of seven years, the seventh to be a sabbath, as for a week of seven days, the seventh to be a sabbath. Sixty-nine sevens are four hundred and eighty-three years. Starting with B. C. 457, we fill up four hundred and eighty-three years in A. D. 26, or the thirtieth year of Christ's life. It was just at this point (see margin of the Reference Bible) that the Messiah came to John, and was baptized by him in Jordan, and immediately afterward "anointed with the Holy Ghost," so that when he began his preaching, he said, "The time is fulfilled; the kingdom of God is at hand." (Mark i. 15.)

Seven years from that time brings us to A. D. 33, and the sacrificial death of Christ, his resurrection, entrance into heaven, his reception and dispensation of the Holy Ghost. Thus the seventy weeks were completed.

THE ONE WEEK.

The one week of verse 27, usually called the last of the seventy, does in fact constitute no part of them at all, but a week independent of them, and belonging to Antichrist and his work alone.

Verse 26 informs us that "after the cutting off of Messiah" (some thirty-seven years after that event) "the people of the prince that should come" (that is, Titus and the Roman people) "shall destroy the city and the sanctuary" (that is, Jerusalem and the temple); "and the end thereof shall be with a flood; and to the end of the war" (of Rome against the Jews) "desolations are determined." That war ended when the Roman government in A. D. 1870, eighteen hundred years from the fall of Jerusalem by the Roman hand, fell. The Jews were by that fall emancipated from Roman thralldom, and are free citizens of Italy, and to-day occupy prominent positions in the government.

THE COVENANT WEEK.

This, be it observed, follows the end of Rome's war on the Jews. That war is done, and they are free from the Roman yoke. We now have but to wait for the man who shall confirm a covenant with the Jews "for one week" of years. He is, as we regard him, the "little horn" of chapter eight, at whose work we have glanced, and also the "vile person" of chapter

eleven, which we are yet to consider. For after having "confirmed a covenant with them," in the midst of the week "he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease." Or, in other words, he shall "take away the daily sacrifice, and place the abomination that maketh desolate." So this man "shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease; and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate." This must be the same act performed by the same person as that described in chapters viii. 11 and xi. 31; for they do precisely the same work. If so, the week is yet to come, as well as the being who shall confirm its prophetic events. But this will appear more evident as we proceed with chapter eleven, where this man and his covenant are more fully revealed, and the preceding visions fully explained. At the end of that week Antichrist will lose his power.

CHAPTER XI.

THE OBJECTS OF THE CHAPTER.

In the preceding chapter, (the tenth) we are informed by the prophet that a vision appeared to him in the third year of Cyrus, in which a glorious angel came to him, — probably Gabriel, who said (verse 14), "*Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days, for yet the vision is for many days.*"

There can be no doubt as to the identity of Daniel's people. They are the Jews; and in the *latter days* the events of chapter eleven are to befall them. Let it be borne in mind, then, that the closing events of the chapter relate to the Jews in an especial manner, more than to any other people. Christ said to the Jews, "*I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not. If another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.*" That one so coming is the vile person of xi. 21, who will be "the prince of the covenant," and make a league with Daniel's people, who will receive him as their long-looked-for Messiah.

MEDO-PERSIAN AND GRECIAN HISTORIC PROPHECY.

The eleventh chapter of Daniel opens with a brief summary, in the first four verses, of the vision of the eighth chapter, so far as the ram, the goat, his great horn, and four notable ones are concerned.

The first verse relates to Media; verse two, to *five successive kings*, who should reign over that dominion — Cyrus, then reigning; Cambyeses, his successor; Smerdis, the Magian; Darius, son of Hystaspes; and lastly, Xorxes the Great, who by his strength and riches raised an army of over five millions of men, with which he invaded Greece; but he was defeated and compelled to retreat, having suffered the most terrible reverses. Here the Persian line is discontinued, intervening kings are passed over, although

nine more reigned before the subject of the following verse was raised to fulfill the vision. But as the object of the Angel is *only to direct the attention of the prophet to the prominent landmarks* of future history, — a feature of the chapter noticeable throughout, — and as at this point commenced what may well be termed the decadence of the Medo-Persian empire, he passes on to consider the history of the mighty king, who in verse three is said to stand up and rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. This, all will perceive, relates to Alexander, the founder of the Macedonian empire, which overthrew Persia, and became mistress of the whole east.

• *Verse 4* relates to the four horns of the goat, the kingdoms of Syria, Egypt, Thrace, and Macedon; but of these four, only two are presented to us in detail, viz., Syria and Egypt. The four generals of Alexander, who established the four kingdoms after his death, were Cassander, who reigned in Greece and the west; Lysimachus, who reigned over Thrace and the north; Ptolemy in Egypt and the south; and Seleucus over Syria and the east.

• *Verse 5.* Here begins the history of two of those four kingdoms, Egypt and Syria, respectively called, in this prophecy, the kings of the north and south; because Egypt lay south of Judea, and Syria north of it, not because of their geographical relation to each other.

The king of the south of verse five, who is said to be strong, was Ptolemy, king of Egypt. He annexed Cyprus, Phoenicia, Caria, and many islands to Egypt. But Seleucus Nicator, king of Syria, another of the princes of Alexander, was strong above him. For he conquered Macedon, Thrace, and the larger part of Asia, from Phrygia to the River Indus.

Verse 6. This verse relates to a marriage alliance between Berenice, daughter of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, and Antiochus Theus, king of Syria. And this, students of history will observe, is simply a landmark in the prophecy, not the next event occurring after the events described in v. 5. A war of some years had existed between these two kingdoms, and it was agreed to settle the strife by a marriage alliance. Antiochus was to put away Laodice, his wife, and marry Berenice, the Egyptian princess; and her children were to succeed to the throne of Syria. The alliance was consummated. But after the death of her father, Antiochus put away Berenice and her son, and recalled his former wife Laodice. She, in turn, to prevent another exile, caused Antiochus to be killed, and placed her son on the throne. She then pursued Berenice and her son, and put them to death. Thus the agreement was broken.

Verses 7-9. -The branch out of her root, spoken of in this verse, was her brother, from the same root with herself. This was Ptolemy Euergetes, king of

Egypt, and brother of Berenice. He raised a large army and invaded Syria to avenge the death of his sister; conquered Syria, Cilicia, and the upper parts beyond the River Euphrates, took immense plunder, and some twenty-five hundred gods, and returned with them to Egypt immensely rich. This king survived Seleucus Callinicus four or five years.

Verses 10-12. The sons of Seleucus Callinicus were Seleucus Cerannus and Antiochus the Great. Seleucus died early, and Antiochus succeeded him, and invaded Egypt with a strong force to avenge the quarrel of his father.

The king of the south at that time was of an indolent, luxurious disposition, and not easily aroused. But seeing danger immediately upon him, he gathered his forces and went out to meet Antiochus, fought a battle, and overthrew him near Raphia. The multitude of Syria was given into the hand of Ptolemy Philopator. But loving indolence, he neglected, to follow up his victory, and thus "was not the strengthened by it."

Thus ends the history of Antiochus the Great in utter defeat by Egypt.

Verse 13. The king of the north of this verse, is not, as generally supposed, Antiochus the Great, again invading Egypt; but Antiochus Epiphanes, the younger son of Antiochus the Great. He "after certain years" came and invaded and conquered all

Egypt, except Alexandria, and that he besieged. This may appear at this place simply an assertion, but its truth we will endeavor to prove at a future point.

Vers. 14. "In those times" refers to the times of the invasion and conquest of Egypt by Epiphanes. "Many shall stand up *against*." The preposition in this place rendered *against* is often, in other places, rendered *for*. For instance, in Dan. xii. 1, we read, "The great prince that standeth [up] *for* the children of thy people." The word translated *for*, in this instance, is precisely the same translated *against* in the verse under consideration. In this case it can only be rendered *for*, the connection and subject both demanding it; the reason why it was rendered *against* in chapter xi. 14, seems to have been because the prevailing opinion was, that Antiochus the Great is the subject; and he and Philip, king of Macedon, had entered into an alliance to conquer and divide Egypt between them; and hence the translators rendered it according to their idea. But applying it to Epiphanes, the facts demand that we read the preposition the same as in Dan. xii. 1 — "*for* the king of the south." For while Antiochus lay before Alexandria, ambassadors from Rhodes visited him at his camp, and pleaded *for* Egypt, but in vain. Afterward ambassadors "from all the states of Greece went by appointment in a body, and one after the other

pleaded for Egypt, but without success."—See *Rollin's Ancient History*.

"Also the robbers of thy people shall exalt themselves to establish the vision." The subjects of Daniel's vision who were to succeed the *fourfold division* of the Greek empire, were the Romans, symbolized by the *dreadful beast*. Above all others may they be termed the robbers of Daniel's people, for they robbed and destroyed the Jewish nation. We do not know of any expositor who does not concede that it was in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, and at the juncture we are now considering, when the Romans came upon the stage as the fulfillers of the vision of the fourth beast, although they think they find it foretold in the thirty-first verse, instead of the fourteenth; to which view we are compelled to object for reasons which we shall presently show. While Rhodes and the Grecian states were striving to reconcile Antiochus to Egypt, the Egyptians sent to Rome for help, and obtained it. Embassadors with letters from the Senate were sent to Egypt. They arrived at Alexandria, and proceeded at once to the Syrian camp.

Popillius, the head of the embassy, an old friend of Antiochus, delivered the letters to the king, who, after glancing at the contents, said, "I will consult with my friends, and answer you soon." Drawing a circle around the feet of the king in the sand, Popillius raised his voice and said, "Answer the Senate before

you leave that circle." The Senate had commanded him to abandon his conquest of Egypt, and go home. Antiochus replied, "I will do as the Senate desires." He then immediately raised the siege and retired from Egypt. That year Rome conquered Macedon, Syria submitted to her commands, and Egypt threw herself on the Senate for existence. Thus Rome became the virtual mistress of the east; and then commenced her prophetic career.

"But they shall fall." This was fulfilled in September, A. D. 1870, when the Italian army fired on Rome, and the pope submitted to superior force; since which time no Roman government has existed.

To this it is objected that it is incongruous that only a part of a verse should be devoted to so important a power as Rome. But those who thus object do not appear to consider, *first*, that this brief note refers to a former vision, in which Rome is *fully represented*; and that it was only needful to say here, that they exalted themselves at this juncture to fulfill the vision. *Secondly*, they do not appear to consider that the objects of these instructions are to introduce the *little horn*, and show from whence he rises, and what he does. Brief as the note is, it does what it was designed to do, and thus Jehovah's purpose in giving it is accomplished.

Verses 15-19. "For the king of the north shall come," &c. The adverb *for* evidently should be

rendered *then*; i. e., next in order. The next in order in this line, — that is, after the final fall of the Roman government, the robbers of Daniel's people, — is the reconstruction of the kingdoms of Egypt and Syria, and their return to their old fonda, as in the days of the Ptolemies and Antiochuses.

That we are correct in placing these kings in "the last time of their kingdoms," and this side the fall of the Roman government, will appear evident to all who recognize the fact that after the king of the north is introduced in verses fifteen to nineteen, *two more of them fill the whole course of time to the resurrection*. No human being can take this chapter from verse fifteen to the end, and carefully study it, and make more than three kings of the north. The history of the first extending from verse fifteen to nineteen; the second, comprehended in *verse twenty*; and that of the third embraced in *verses twenty-one to forty-five*; and that the third one is the little horn out of one of the four horns of the goat. This king of verse fifteen is to invade and conquer Egypt, and give a wife to the king; to stand in Palestine, invade and conquer many isles, and then be defeated and start for home; but is "to stumble and fall, and not be found," thus evidently implying that he shall never reach his destination. In applying this prediction to Antiochus the Great, we meet with the following difficulties, which render it evident that the prophecy does not

apply to him. Antiochus the Great, after his defeat in Greece, *did* start for home, and — *reached* it. He there made peace with Rome. Afterward reorganizing his forces, he started on an expedition to the east “in order to levy money to pay the Romans; but having plundered the temple of Elymais, beyond the Tigris, he there lost his life in a miserable manner.”— See *Rollin*.

THE SECOND FUTURE KING OF THE NORTH.

He will be the “raiser of taxes” of *verse twenty*. His history is brief. First. He is to “stand up” or reign in place of the invader of the isles, who stumbles and falls, and is not found; and therefore he is also *the king of the north*. Second. He will reign a few days only, when he will be destroyed. Thus will pass away this second king of the series.

This “raiser of taxes” is usually regarded as Seleucus Callinicus, elder son of Antiochus the Great, and his successor. But as Antiochus did not meet the requirements of the nineteenth verse, by falling without reaching home, this can not be Seleucus; and besides, he reigned, instead of a *few days*, *eleven years*.

THE THIRD KING — THE VILE PERSON.

Verse 21. “In his estate shall stand up” — that is in the estate of the “raiser of taxes” — a *vile person*, who will be destroyed, and thus *he* too will be *king of the north*. This prophecy is usually applied to Antio-

chus Epiphanes, younger son of Antiochus the Great, and brother of Seleucus. But if Solonens and Antiochus did not fill the part of the other two kings, this cannot be Epiphanes who did succeed his brother Seleucus.

But again, Epiphanes no more filled the part of this king than his father and brother did of the two preceding ones. The text says of this one, "He shall come in peaceably, and obtain the kingdom by flatteries." This does not agree with the history of Epiphanes at all. We find that his brother was destroyed by Heliodorus, his treasurer, who *usurped the throne*. Antiochus immediately went to Pergamos, and obtained help of king Eumenes, who marched with an army, met and overthrew *Heliodorus*, and placed Antiochus on the throne. If this was coming in "peaceably," what would be by war?—See *Rollin*.

Thus we have shown three successive kings—to whom almost the entire body of expositors have applied these three verses—each to have failed to fulfill the part assigned them. We have also shown that Antiochus the Great and Epiphanes did fulfill the parts assigned them from verse ten to thirteen. And Epiphanes can be found nowhere else in this chapter. Besides, if we accept Epiphanes as the "vile person," we are compelled to adopt the plan of the old commentators, and of some moderns, and continue his history to verse forty-five, thus making him live in the

"time of the end," when the resurrection and glorification of Daniel's people will take place. We must also have him *this side of Christ*, to set "the abomination of desolation in the holy place;" for that event was yet in the future in Christ's day. But the "*vile person*" is the one who is to place it there. Therefore he could not be Antiochus Epiphanes.

It was so plain to all the early commentators that the vile person of verse twenty-one was the same man that at verse forty-five is said to—"come to his end, and none shall help him," that none ever thought of any other construction. Even Porphyry, the man who attempted to overthrow Daniel on the ground that his book was written after the event took place, maintained that it described Antiochus Epiphanes.

It does not ever seem to have entered the mind of any, that it is not the career of one man which is described from verse twenty-one to forty-five, until the time of the Reformation, when it was needful, in order to prove the pope to be Antichrist, to introduce Rome in verse thirty-one. But it is a violent construction only which can accomplish it, and can never make harmony of the prophecy. For unquestionably the kings of the north and south are again on the stage from verse forty to forty-five. And it is more difficult to change from Rome to them at that point, than from them to Rome at verse thirty-one. And neither can be done without violence to language.

Verse 22. "And with the arms of a flood shall they be overflown from before him, and shall be broken."

It seems that, like Napoleon III., who by flattery peaceably obtained the title of emperor, and after he was seated found violent resistance from the people, but defended himself by crushing them, so will this Syrian king do when he shall rise. The people, having been betrayed by his flatteries, will rise against him. But with the arms of a flood will he overflow and break them. He will root up the former dynasty, and establish his own in its place. Thus Syria will be the first of the three out of the ten kingdoms which will fall before him, as set forth in Daniel vii. 8.

"Yea also, the prince of the covenant." It is evident that there is in this clause an ellipsis, which must be supplied to make the sense complete. There does not seem to be more than two ways of supplying it, viz., first, "Yea also, the prince of the covenant *shall be broken*;" or secondly, "Yea also, *he shall be* the prince of the covenant." If we adopt the first, it is left in uncertainty who the prince of the covenant is. If we adopt the second, it makes the *vile person* the prince of the covenant, and thus harmonize with —

Verse 23. "And after the league (or covenant made with him," &c. If he is *not* the prince of the covenant, why proceed to speak of the covenant

made with him? There can be no reasonable doubt, therefore, but what this is the true reading. Then we are referred back to chapter nine, twenty-seventh verse, for the covenant *for one week*, which this prince confirms "with many" Jews. For it must not be forgotten that the object of this revelation is, to make known "what shall befall" Daniel's "people in the latter days." "He shall come up and become strong with a small people." One great objection which has been urged against the view set forth in these pages, is, "that even if Syria should regain her independence, she is so small that it is incredible that she should ever do what is foretold of this power. So it would seem. Yet if this king can succeed in securing an alliance with the Jews, with their enormous wealth, learning and numbers, a scattered people though they now are, what could he not do? So we are told that "he shall be the prince of the covenant;" (of Dan. ix. 27). "And after the league made with him, he shall work deceitfully; for he shall come up, and become strong with a small people."

Verse 24. "He shall enter peaceably even upon the fattest places of the province." All opposition to him will then die out, and he will take possession, as the Messiah, whom he will profess to be, of all the land of Palestine, and do what his father never did—to secure the confidence of the Jewish people, he will

scatter the spoil and prey among them with a bountiful hand.

Verse 25. "And he shall stir up his power and courage against the king of the south with a great army." No sooner than he feels himself firmly seated, and has at his command a sufficient force, than he will declare war against Egypt, and march against it with a great army. "And the king of the south . . . with a great and mighty army," far exceeding that of the king of the north, "shall be stirred up to battle." But large as the army of Egypt will be, he shall not be able to stand against Syria. "For they shall forecast devices against him," i. e., defeat him by superior strategy.

Verse 26. "Yea, they that feed of the portion of his meat shall destroy him," &c. His own men and officers will betray and overthrow the Egyptian king. "And his army" (the army of the king of the north) "shall overflow; and many" (of the king of the south's army) "shall fall down slain."

Verse 27. "And both these kings' hearts shall be to do mischief," &c. They are described as having an interview with each other, and upon the occasion a feast. And while they negotiate, apparently with honest purposes, they will both have it in their hearts to do mischief, and shall speak lies to each other at one table. But the plans of neither will stand or prosper.

Verse 28. "Then shall he" (the king of Syria) "return into his land with great riches," obtained by his Egyptian conquest.

"His heart shall be against the holy covenant, and he shall do exploits, and return to his own land." That is, his heart shall be against the covenant made with the Jews. For being now strong and wealthy, he will feel his importance and independence, and so become wearied of the covenant he has made.

Verse 29. "At the time appointed he shall return, and come toward the south; but it shall not be as the former or as the latter." It does not appear by whom appointed; but by whomsoever the time is appointed, his return will not be as successful as in his former assault on Egypt, or as a still future war with the same power will be. The former (*verses 25-28*) was, as we have seen, and so also will be the latter, as foretold in the fortieth verse, "at the time of the end." The reason of this failure is stated in

Verse 30. "For the ships of Chittim shall come against him."

Kittim, or Chittim, was the son of Javan, grandson of Noah. Javan's descendants settled in the isles of the Gentiles, i. e., the Grecian Isles—Gen. x. 4, 5. When Gabriel came to make Daniel understand the vision of the eighth chapter, he informed him that the rough goat whom he saw was "the king of Javan."

Alexander reigned over the whole Grecian race

and countries. Chittim, then, clearly means the Greeks. A naval force from Greece, then, will come against the vile person, and defeat him on this, his second expedition against Egypt, and "he shall be grieved, and return" home.

He is then described as having "indignation against the holy covenant"—that is, the same covenant with the Jews of which he is described to have become wearied in verse twenty-eight. But after this defeat he will be enraged at it, probably suspecting some treachery on the part of the Jews, and will determine to release himself from it; and to this end "he will have intelligence," or confer with the enemies of the covenant as to how it may be done.

Verse 31. "And arms shall stand on his part." In the eighth chapter of his prophecy we are informed that "a *host* was given him against the daily sacrifice."

The *host* of this passage is the same as *arms* in the passage under consideration, and in both passages it means that the army will be at his command, and that it will be used to take away, or cause to be discontinued, the daily sacrifice, or temple worship of the Jews, which he will have agreed to sustain and protect. They will also be his agents to place the abomination of desolation in the temple as an object of worship. This is the same which Christ referred to in his prediction of Matt. xxiv. 15, which was future

even in his day. It is no doubt the same as the image of the beast spoken of in the thirteenth chapter of Revelation; and also as the strange god of this same man in verses 38, 39.

Verse 32. "And such as do wickedly against the covenant." There will be a class of Jews who, disregarding the covenant, will join with the king in its violation. These he will flatter and corrupt. But another class, faithful adherents to the worship of their God, will be firm and strong in maintaining the right against all encroachments.

Verse 33. "And they that understand among the people shall instruct many." This means that there will be a class who will understand the time in which they live, and warn the people. But for so doing, they will suffer great persecutions for twelve hundred and ninety days, or as it is written, "many days."

Verse 34. "Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help." They will find some relief from the terrible calamities inflicted upon them by this king; "but many shall cleave to them with flatteries," only to betray them the more readily.

Verse 35. "And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge," &c. The faithful religious teachers, in order that they may be fully purged, will be tried by various forms of persecution up to the time of the end, and events of verses 40 to 45.

Verse 36. "And the king." The king of this verse

is the same as the one introduced at verse 21. The king of the north "shall do according to his will;" that is, he will be an absolute despot, and exalt himself so high that he shall do whatever pleases him without fear of opposition or defeat. Thus he shall perform the part of the man of sin as described in 2 Thessa. ii., as will be seen by comparing that description with this. "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." Thus Paul writes. So also the angel to Daniel: "And he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods." Are not the two descriptions word pictures of one and the same person?

Verse 37. "Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any God; for he shall magnify himself above all." Here the parallel between Daniel and Paul is seen to be complete. So that there can be no doubt but what Paul's man of sin and Daniel's willful king are, as we have already said, identical. Therefore the man of sin cannot be the pope; for when has he, or the system of which he is the head, ever magnified himself above every God, and regarded not the God of his fathers, nor any God? It may be replied, that he has not done so as to the bare fact, but that the whole tenor of his assumptions

and his acts in reality veils God from the sight of his followers, and concentrates their attention upon him as the head of his people. But we reply, this does not at all meet the case. Corrupt as the system of the papacy may be, yet no one can pretend that any pope has ever even professed to magnify himself above all Gods, or has ever ceased in his teachings to regard the God of his fathers. On the contrary, he has ever appealed to him as his superior, calling upon him to bless those whom he blessed; to pour out the vials of his wrath on the heads of those on whom his maledictions rested. He has, it is true, assumed high titles, but never ceased to teach that he was but God's vicegerent upon earth, — it is true, clothed with God-like powers, but yet *inferior to, and submissive to God*. Nor have his followers, in the moments of their blindest devotion ever regarded him as more than that. In a parallel passage, in Rev. xiii., we find the ten horned beast therein described demanding this same universal worship; and all who dwell on the earth shall worship him, unless their names are written in the book of life. Beside this worship of the beast, as described in Rev. xiii., it appears that he has an image, to be worshiped under the direction of a two horned beast, whose character and mission are therein set forth. So in like manner this willful king, as we read in

Verses 38 and 39, will have and honor "a strange god, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory."

THE TIME OF THE END.

Verse 40. "And at the time of the end shall the king of the south" (Egypt) "push at him" (the king of the north). "And the king of the north" (Syria) "shall come against him" (the king of Egypt) "like a whirlwind." At the time of his former attempt on Egypt, *verse 30*, a naval force repelled him. Now he comes with a powerful force of his own against Egypt, as also with artillery and cavalry, and is successful in the war. And besides conquering Egypt, he will enter all the adjoining countries, such as Edom, Moab, and Ammon, and for a season make them his subjects.

Verse 41. "The glorious land" is Palestine, which also he will possess. But he will not be able to hold them all; for Edom, Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon, will escape from him.

Verse 42. "He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries; and the land of Egypt shall not escape. This will probably be another of the three horns which will be plucked up by the roots before him; "and the glorious land," Palestine, will be a third one. These he holds.

Verse 43. "All Egypt's precious things will be at his disposal." What is meant by the Ethiopians and Libyans being at his steps is not clear.

Verse 44. "But tidings out of the east and out of

"the north shall trouble him." That is, he will hear that his eastern conquests are in revolt, and will hasten with fury to subdue them.

Verse 45. "The tabernacle of his palace between the seas," the Dead and the Mediterranean, on Mount Zion. There as the Antichrist he will plant himself in opposition to Jesus Christ, and meet him there in the battle of that great day of God Almighty. "Yet he shall come to his end and none shall help him." "Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." (2 Thess. ii. 8.) Thus shall Christ, when he comes with the armies of heaven to take vengeance on all his enemies, overthrow and cast him into the lake of fire, where the smoke of his torment shall ascend forever and ever.

CHAPTER XII.

THE STANDING UP OF MICHAEL.

Verse 1. "At that time." This does not necessarily mean, as many have supposed, at the time that the willful king comes to his end, but during the period of his career, as given in chapter xi, especially during his persecutions of the saints. "Shall Michael stand up;" "Michael your prince," chap. x. 21. "Michael, one of the chief princes;" Michael the archangel," &c. Michael is one of the high angels, a companion and fellow-servant of Gabriel,

and the one who has the special supervision of the Jewish nation. "Stand up." That is, shall organize his hosts and marshal them for the defense of Daniel's people. "And there shall be a time of trouble." This is the same as the tribulation of Matt. xxiv. 21, consequent on the standing of "the abomination of desolation" in *the holy place*. And this determines the import of the phrase, "At that time," to mean the period of the "*vile person's*," administration, not the time of his fall. "Such as never was since there was a nation." Christ has it—"from the beginning of the world to that time, no, nor ever shall be."

"And at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book of life." The deliverance is that which all saints will experience at Christ's coming to destroy AntiChrist—their resurrection and glorification, as described in the following verses.

Verses 2. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake." In saying "many" he implies that all will not awake, the same as when the evangelist says, "and *many* of the bodies of the saints which slept arose." There is also plainly stated the orders of the *resurrection*: "some, (or, as Professor Bush rendered it), those (the awakened) to everlasting life, and those (the unawakened)—to shame and everlasting contempt."

This agrees with Christ's words in John v. 29, where, speaking of the time of the resurrection of the

dead, he says, "and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." Here the two orders of resurrection are adverted to; an order yet more fully set forth in Rev. xx. 4-6, which will be considered in its proper place.

Verse 3. "And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." No language can more fully express the exaltation and eternal glorification of the saints of God in their resurrection state than does this passage, so full of beauty and hope; and we have here the time of recompense to God's tried and purified saints, when, redeemed from mortality and the sufferings of life they shall shine as stars in the kingdom of their Father.

Verse 4. "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, even to the time of the end." These instructions are unlike those of the Apocalypse; these predictions were not for the instruction of the prophet, or those who lived in that age, but for the benefit of later ages, and especially the closing period of time. "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased;" or, as some express it, "many shall turn to and fro the pages of the book; and the knowledge of its import shall be increased." This is the view adopted by many modern commentators, and among them that of Rev. A. R. Faussett,

who says on this passage, "It does not refer to the modern rapidity of locomotion, as some think, nor to Christian missionaries going about to preach the gospel to the world at large, which the context scarcely admits, but, whereas now but few care for this prophecy of God, 'at the time of the end,' i. e. near its fulfillment, 'many shall run to and fro,' i. e. scrutinize it, running through every page. It is thereby that the knowledge (viz. of God's purpose as revealed in the prophecy) shall be increased." But whether we regard it in this light or in the sense of general and speedy locomotion, or in increase of knowledge on all subjects, it is remarkably fulfilled in our own day.

Verses 5-7. In these three verses, a vision of the prophet is described, in which two angels, one on either side of the river, and a third standing on the waters of the river, appeared in earnest converse; one asking the other, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" i. e., how long a period will be required for the closing up of these wonders? Not how long from the third year of Cyrus to the end. The angel answered with uplifted hands, and swore by him that liveth forever, "that it shall be for a time, times, and a half." Will that bring the end? may be inquired. It will not, we reply. After that period ends, the power of the holy people must be scattered or broken up. And it is not until that shall be accomplished, that all will be finished. The vilo

king is the one who is to scatter that power. This period is the first half of the one week already spoken of, as set forth in Dan. ix. 27, during which the Jewish power will be concentrated and established. The other part of the week will be filled in an effort to scatter their power.

Verse 8. "I heard, but I understood not; then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?" That is, what will be after the time, times, and a half end?

Verse 9. "And he said, Go thy way, Daniel. For the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end" — the time unto which he was told, in verse 4, to seal them up, so that he was not permitted by God to understand them.

Verse 10. "Many," under the persecution of Antichrist, "shall be purified, made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand" the times in which they live, and the approach of the end; "but the wise shall understand" the subject.

Verse 11. "And from the time that the daily sacrifice" (which is set up after the league made between Antichrist and the Jews) "shall be taken away" (as we read in chapter xi. 31) "and the abomination that maketh desolate set up," there shall be left of the one week of Antichrist, "a thousand two hundred and ninety days," to the end of the week.

In seven times or years (of 365 days each) are 2555 days. $2555 - 1290 = 1265$. Then the first part of the week is 1265 days long. At the end of the 1290 days the week ends, and the power of the vile person to persecute the saints will be at an end; but not his ruling power over his own subjects. That will continue until the great battle described in Rev. xix. 11, when he and his followers will be completely overthrown, and God's waiting, suffering church rewarded for all their numerous and severe trials.

Verse 12. "Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." These days are not contemporaneous with the twelve hundred and ninety days, as is usually understood, but consecutive in their order. The twelve hundred and ninety days, are the times of the tribulation of the saints, the thirteen hundred and thirty-five, the time of God's judgments on the wicked, when the saints who reach their beginning will be blest or happy; for they will suffer no more, but only see the reward of the wicked in the seven last plagues.

Verse 13. "But go thou thy way till the end. For thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." At the end of the thirteen hundred and thirty-five days, then, Daniel will have his resurrection and reward, — not before; and with him all the saints of God.

The entire length of time from the commencement

Antichrist here confirms a covenant with many for one week.

365 days of preparation.
1010 days of Temple service.
The period of friendship between Antichrist and Jews, and days of preparation.
1265 Days.

He here breaks it, and the daily sacrifice is taken away, and Abomination of Desolation set up.

The one week of the covenant of Dan. 9:27 + 1265 days of Dan. 12:12 = 2530 days.
1265 + 1265 = 2530 days.
2530 - 2500 = 305 days.
Period of persecution under Antichrist.
1500.

Sign of Son of Man. Ending of persecution, and end of the one week.

Period of plagues and afflictions pronounced by God, and executed by His angels under Christ, on Antichrist and his allies.
1235.

Appearance of Christ to reign.

CHART OF THE PROPHECIC PERIODS OF DANIEL.

BY REV. J. L. LITCH.

of the one week of the covenant will be 2555 days + 1335 days = 3890 days. The twenty-three hundred days of chapter viii. 14, embrace the whole time from the setting up of the temple service, after the covenant is made, to the end of the abomination in the temple. Thus $2555 - 2300 = 255$ days. We will suppose these to be the days of preparation for the daily offerings. Then $2300 - 1290 = 1010$ days for the offerings to be continued. This will leave twelve hundred and ninety days for the abomination of desolation in the holy place. Thus $255 + 1010 + 1290 = 2555$ days, or one week of years. (See *Chart* for a connected view, page 75.) Thus we have endeavored, as briefly as consistent with the dignity and importance of the subject, to give a general outline of the great scheme of prophetic events from the days of Daniel down to the consummation of God's purposes in the establishment of his everlasting kingdom under the whole heavens, and are now prepared to enter into the study of the closing book of God's revelation to man. Let us proceed to the study with the earnest prayer that God may indeed lead us into all truth, and give us hearts to understand and love that truth. And let us endeavor to exercise that spirit of broad charity and earnest research which will bear with what we may consider folly, and accept nothing until we have obeyed the scriptural injunction, and "*proved all things,*" that we may "*hold fast to that which is true.*"

THE APOCALYPSE.

CHAPTER I.

Verse 1. "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John."

The word *Apocalypse* signifies *manifestation* or *unveiling*; hence many understand it as a *manifestation* of the person of Jesus Christ. It is perfectly true that we are afforded a *view* of his person in the progress of the revolution; but that this is the import of this introduction to the book we think is incorrect. It distinctly purports to be a revelation which Jesus Christ, by the will of God, made through the ministry of his angel to his servant John, concerning "*things* which must come to pass with celerity." It is apparent, therefore, that it is Christ the revealer of "*things*," rather than Christ the revealed, that is presented. Thus he is presented as the one who reveals all the various series of things which are recorded in the book; as he says

in the closing chapter, "I Jesus have sent my angel to testify these things in the churches."

This Apocalypse came thus: God gave it to Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ to his angel; the angel gave it to John; and John wrote it in a scroll, and sent it to the seven churches which are in Asia; and thus it has come to us.

The words *εὐ ταχὺ* are in the common version deprived of their proper signification by the use of the word "shortly." The sense is not that the things about to be described would "shortly come to pass" *from that time*; but it is a revelation of things which, when the time comes for their accomplishment, will follow each other "*with speed*," and thus all be *then* fulfilled in a short time. In the closing portion of the book Christ makes reference to this declaration, and avers that he *has done* what is here proposed; thus we read (chapter xxii. 6), "And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true, and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show his servants the things which must *shortly* come to pass." Here the same thought is apparent—the celerity with which events would *whirl* on toward their fulfillment when the era marked for their commencement should dawn.

This is a distinct statement of the nature of the book, and it entirely precludes the historical view held by the greater mass of commentators, which

makes the events described cover many ages in their accomplishment. Says Faussett, "The church *historical* view goes counter to the great principle that Scripture interprets itself. Revelation is to teach us to understand the *times*, not the times to interpret to us the Apocalypse.

Verse 2. "Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw."

There are three things of which the seer informs us he bare record. 1. Of the word of God, for this revelation came from God. 2. Of the testimony of Jesus Christ, for there are a number of testimonies from him in this book. 3. "And of all things which he saw" in the following visions. Those three parts constitute the entire book.

Verse 3. "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand."

If the blessing had been pronounced on those only understanding these prophetic records, how few would be encouraged to seek the blessing! But God has not left us with any such impression; very far from it indeed. It is pronounced on the reader and hearer, that is, as was *originally* meant, on the *public* reader, who, in the church assemblies, read the message of God to the churches in accordance with his word:

and on those who heard with a view to keeping the words which are written therein. But it none the less applies to all who earnestly read, hear, and endeavor to keep the sayings of God recorded within its pages. In due time those who perform these three parts shall see their accomplishment, and understand the predictions. They will be able to say, "Thus it was written, and *thus* it comes to pass."

Versé 4. "John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne."

The salutation written in this verse is addressed to the churches of Asia Minor, in whose service this apostle had spent much of his life; and for which, at the time of writing, he was in exile and suffering.

The benediction is pronounced in the name of God the Father, who fills eternity; "which is, which was, and which is to come." It is true that Jesus Christ appropriates the same terms to himself. But this only proves him co-eternal with the Father. That it is not Christ to whom reference is made in this verse is clear from his being specially and distinctly named in verse 5, "*and from Jesus Christ,*" &c.

"And from the seven spirits which are before his throne." These seven spirits Professor Stuart regards as "seven presence angels," such as Gabriel, who announced himself to Zacharias (Luko i. 19), say-

ing, "I am Gabriel, who stand in the presence of God." They are Christ's hierarchy, and are placed under his immediate direction, and hence are symbolized by the seven horns and seven eyes of the Lamb. (Chapter v. 6.) Also, in chapter viii. 2, we are told of the "seven angels which stood before God;" the very place the seven spirits are said to occupy.

Verse 5. "And from Jesus Christ, *who is the faithful Witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.*"

He is the channel of all grace to a lost world. His characteristics are thus stated: 1. "The faithful witness." He has testified the Father's will. 2. "The first begotten from the dead." Others had been raised from the dead before him, as the two children raised by Elijah and Elisha, the man who was raised by touching the bones of the prophet, the daughter of Jairus, the widow's son, and Lazarus. But these were raised in mortality, to live their appointed time, and then again pass into the grave. Jesus Christ was born into a new and immortal life, and hence can die no more — the first begotten from the dead of all those who will after come up through him, to share the immortality of which he alone is the dispenser. 3. "The prince, or *archon*, chief ruler of the kings of the earth." When on earth he declared, "All power

is given unto me in heaven and in earth." (Matt. xxviii. 18.) And so we are told by the apostle in Ephesians, Chapter i. 20-22, that God "raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church." Thus all kings of the earth are now under his providential government as their chief prince. He is not now their king. But when he shall come from heaven to take possession of his kingdom, he will then bear the title of "King of Kings, and Lord of Lords;" for he will then have received his royal investiture. Now he is the nobleman gone away into a far country to receive to himself a kingdom. When once received he will come again to take possession and enter upon his regal rights.

"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." No other fountain can wash away our sins; this alone can purify, and this the love of Christ to us has provided—*his own blood*. Happy he who with full confidence can say,—

"By faith I plunge me in this sea;
Here is my hope, my joy, my rest."

Verse 6. "And hath made us kings and priests

unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

These words have stood in their present form for many years. But recent eminent critics are generally agreed that the passage should be rendered according to some of the oldest manuscripts, "made us a kingdom; priests to God and his Father." All British subjects are not kings, but they constitute a kingdom. So with Christ's redeemed; they will not all be kings, except as in a general sense they are joint heirs with him, and are promised a seat on his throne, but will together be a *kingdom*, under Christ their king. Each saint is a priest to offer unto God spiritual sacrifices. (Peter ii. 5.)

Verse 7. "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they *also* which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."

Christ having been presented in the preceding verses as the one to whom we owe all we are or hope to be, John breaks forth in the exclamation of this verse, and carries us forward to the time when we shall be incorporated into the kingdom which he makes us, that is, when he "cometh with clouds." The expression here used is one of which Christ himself made use when, in instructing his disciples as to the signs preceding and attending his advent, he said (Matt. xxiv. 30), "And then shall all the tribes of the

earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." When he ascended, a cloud received him out of their sight, and the shining ones, who appeared to the sorrowing, astonished disciples, declared, "that he should come again in like manner"—a terrible day of doom to the ungodly, but the consummation of the Christian's hope; for it is the signal of his perfect deliverance from this world, and his introduction to that state of immortality in which he shall have fullness of joy forever. We shall then "be like him, for we shall see him as he is." Well might the poet exclaim, inspired by the same exultant hope which filled the breast of the rapt apostle,—

"O, what a blessed hope is ours
While here on earth we stay!
We more than taste the heavenly powers
And antedate that day."

"They also who pierced him." These words are not to be taken simply as a reference to those whose sin, resting on Christ, pierced his soul with anguish; they perhaps may imply or cover this, but the phrase has undoubted reference to the Roman soldiers, long dead, but alive in spirit, who pierced his hands, and his feet with the nails, and his side with the "cruel" spear, as also to the Jews, who bitterly and with malignancy demanded his death. All the dead in spirit will behold the scene. "And all the tribes of

the earth," living at the time, and opposed to and hating him, "shall wail because of him," knowing that the time of their irrevocable, everlasting destiny has come.

Verse 8. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

It is the one who comes in clouds, who makes this claim to stand at the top and bottom, at the beginning and ending, of the line. None preceded him, and none will follow when he shall cease to be. The existing, the past, and the future, thus he fills eternity; and having made this known, he affirms himself to be "the Almighty." Who, then, can resist the conclusion that he is what he, not only here, but throughout his entire history, claims to be, the eternal God, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father?

Verse 9. "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Christ the revealer having been exhibited in the preceding verses, in this verse John, his servant and agent, defines himself. "I John," a person well known to the churches of proconsular Asia, "who am also your brother" in Christ, "and companion in tribulation," suffering with you for the

same Master; "and" companion "in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ." The sense in which John and his brethren were in the kingdom of Jesus Christ was the sense in which the trees of a nursery are an orchard. They are an orchard *in embryo*. The same trees found in the nursery will, when transplanted, constitute the orchard. So the saints of God, enduring the trials of the present state, are heirs of the kingdom, where the grace of patience will not be tried, it having already been proved here. "Was in the isle called Patmos," a rocky and desolate island in the Mediterranean Sea, off the coast of Asia Minor, about thirty miles in circumference. At what time in the world's history these visions were given is not certain. But the mass of testimony seems to favor the time of Domitian, emperor of Rome; but others claim it to have been under Nero. But it is of no material consequence which emperor was reigning at the time. The book is equally inspired in either case.

Verse 10. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet."

While thus exiled he informs us, "I was *εν πνευματι εν τη κηρα τη ιμμερα* in spirit in the day pertaining to the Lord." There is a diversity of opinion as to the import of this passage, some contending that it means Sunday, or the first day of the week, and others that it means the *day of judgment*. The argu-

ment in favor of the latter view is this: 1. The first day of the week is never designated in the Greek Testament by any other expression than σαββατος — *Sabbatos*. If there is an exception here, it has no support anywhere else. 2. The proposition *ev*, in, used alike before πνευματι, *spirit*, and before ἡμερα, *day*, demands a uniform rendering; if in *spirit*, it should also be in the day; not in *spirit* and on the day. It is not, "I was in a spiritual frame of mind on Sunday," as is usually understood; but, "I was in *spirit*" entranced "in the day pertaining to the Lord" — the same as Paul was absent from the church in body, but "present in *spirit*," except that we are not to suppose Paul's *spirit* to have been actually entranced as was John's, but that his *mind* was with them, while John was actually entranced, and permitted to be in that day and witness its events. The argument in favor of regarding the phrase as referring to the first day of the week is, 1. That the Christian fathers used the phrase as referring to the first day of the week. 2. That the expression of 2 Peter iii. 10, "But the day of the Lord," ἡ ἡμερα κυριου, is a different form of expression from this under consideration. This is true; but it by no means follows that it means Sunday. The argument is in favor of the day of judgment. But the crowning argument is this, — which will be developed more fully as we proceed, — that the scenes which John saw described in the following

chapter are really descriptions of the transactions of the time of judgment; and so the words "in the day pertaining to the Lord" must have reference to that period.

"I heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet." This attracted his attention to what follows.

Verse 11. "Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last; and, what thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamus, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea."

These seven churches were each to be served with a copy of the scroll, for greater safety and certainty of transmission to succeeding generations.

Verse 12. "And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks."

"I turned to see the voice which spake with me;" or to discern the person from whom the voice proceeded. "And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks," or, more properly, lamp-stands, — not such as were used first in the tabernacle and afterwards in the temple, for that was *one* with *seven* branches. This must have been seven distinct lamp-stands; for in the midst of them was one like unto the Son of Man; yet no doubt expressing the same thought as did the candlestick of the temple, — the

entire church of God, — but yet each unlike that one, unrestricted to one outward unity and one place. "The several churches are mutually independent as to external ceremonies and government (provided all things are done to edification, and schisms and needless separations are avoided), yet one in the unity of the spirit and the headship of Christ." *

Verses 13-16. "And in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars; and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword; and his countenance was as the sun-shineth in his strength."

No doubt in this description of the glory of his person there is a symbolization of the exalted perfections of his being and office. But at the same time we see no incongruity in regarding this as a *real* description of his person, blazing in brightness and glory indescribable. As terribly glorious a likeness of majesty and beauty as this word picture of the glorified God-man presents, we of course do not consider it as anything more than a feeble representation of what actually exists. To one who was on the

mount of transfiguration with Christ, there could be no room for doubt, as to the identity of this glorious personage — the Son of God in his majesty, as he will appear when he comes in his glory.

Verses 17. "And when I saw him I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last."

The scene was so awfully glorious as to overwhelm the entranced seer, and cause him to fall as dead before the feet of his divine Master. "But he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last." Unwilling that the servant whom he had loved on earth so tenderly, and whom even in his glory he had not forgotten, should suffer from the majesty of his presence, he stoops to raise him up, and condescends to still his fears. How like that Master, who, when the fears of his disciples were aroused as he walked upon the waters of the Sea of Galilee, allayed their terror by his words, "It is I, be not afraid!" So now he says, "Fear not, I am the first and the last."

Verses 18. "I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

John could not mistake this for any other but Christ. Christ had promised (Matt. xvi. 18) that the gates

of hades, the place of custody of the souls of the departed, should not be so fast closed as to prevail against or prevent his church, so but what he would rescue the soul of every child of God from its dominion. He had now been dead, and his soul had been in the custody of hades, and his body in that of death. Both had been vanquished, so that his "soul was not left in hades; neither did his flesh see corruption." Having seized the keys of the world of the dead, and released himself from its power, he had the power also to rescue the human race from its grasp; a power well calculated to reassure one who had perfect confidence in his willingness so to do. Hades is never used in the New Testament for the grave; and is only once so rendered, and that erroneously, in 1 Cor. xv. 55, where the apostle ecstatically exclaims, in view of a coming triumph, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave (hades), where is thy victory?" It is a matter of divine revelation that the Redeemer descended into hades, else his soul could never have been there; and it is in reference to his victory over their powers that it is exclaimed, "And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Thus himself conquering, he obtained the right to open the gates of hades for others; and this he means when he says, "I have the keys of hades and of death." The key is the symbol of power to open or shut.

Verse 19. "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter."

This book of Revelation, we are informed in this verse, is to consist of three parts. 1. "The things thou hast seen." These are written in the first chapter—his vision of Christ in his glory. 2. "The things which are." These are found in the immediately succeeding chapters—the letters to the angels of seven churches of Asia Minor. 3. "The things which shall be hereafter." These are found from chapter iv. 1, to the end of the book.

Verse 20. "The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches."

Then follows the explanation: the meaning of the seven stars is, "the angels" (or pastors) "of the seven churches." "The seven candlesticks are the seven churches." Nothing can be more simple, plain, or literal than this statement; and all after references to either of these two objects here named and explained, must be understood as symbolizing just what they are here declared to do.

CHAPTER II.

THE SEVEN LETTERS.

The last verse of the preceding chapter explains the mystery of the seven stars in the right hand of Christ, and of the seven golden candlesticks in the midst of which he walked, by saying, "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches; and the seven golden candlesticks are the seven churches." The term *angel* is here used for *pastor*. Nor should we confound the star and candlestick, as is almost universally done by expositors; for they are two distinct things. When Christ, therefore, addresses the angel of the church, whose symbol is a *star*, he does not mean the church whose symbol is a *golden candlestick*. These seven letters are addressed to the stars, not the *candlesticks*; to the *angels* of the churches, and not the churches themselves. That the *angels* of the churches are the *pastors* will appear evident as we proceed with the examination of the letters.

The visions of John were to be written in a book and sent to the churches as the Spirit's testimony to them. But the letters were not given to him in vision, or, in other words, were not what he saw, but instructions from Christ as to what John should write in his name to these seven *angels* or *pastors*.

Christ wished to send a book to each of these seven

churches; and so he instructed his servant John to write it, and told him what to write in it. But in sending a book to a church, it would be one of the most natural things in the world to send it to the care of the pastor, and while sending the book to his care for the church, to send to him a private and friendly letter, instructing him as to what was to be done with the book, and filled up with personal matters.

With respect to the book and its testimony, which was for the church, his instruction to each pastor was, "He that hath an ear, ~~let~~ him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches," in this book; for it is for all who will hear.

THE EPHESIAN LETTER.

Verses 1. "Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus, write: These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks."

So said He who "walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, and holds the stars in his right hand" — Jesus Christ. To this pastor he says, —

Verses 2, 3. "I know thy works, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil; and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not; and hast found them liars. And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted."

The personal pronouns *thou* and *thy*, addressed to

a pastor, can never be made to refer to a church for an antecedent. The works expressed are the works of the pastor, not of the church. It is in this way that Christ indicates his intense personal interest in and superintendence over those whom he had placed as under shepherds over the churches which by his divine providence have been organized on earth. Is it not another way of saying, "I hold thee in my right hand"? I watch thy acts and mark thy words, and hold thee responsible for the good or injury those words or acts do to my cause? So what follows is in reference to the administrative work of a pastor. "Thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars." So far his pastoral work had the divine approval, and he has still words of praise for him. "And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted." These qualities all meet with his unfeigned approbation, as being just what should distinguish the labors of a faithful pastor; but here the scene changes, and he is brought face to face with his faults, as seen by his Lord.

Verses 4. "Nevertheless, I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou hast left thy first love."

Trivial as this often appears to man, it was no small offense in the eyes of Him who seeth not as man seeth,

for it affected the integrity of the affections of one whose vows were upon him to be wholly the Lord's, devoted body, soul, and spirit, given up in all the elements of his being to his service. But if it was a grievous offense eighteen hundred years ago in the pastor of the church of Ephesus, can it be any less now for any other pastor whom God has called to this responsible station? Evidently our Lord designed these seven pastors to furnish an example of his views with respect to all pastors in all time. What Jesus approved in him he will approve in all others, and what he disapproved in him he will in like manner disapprove in all others. And his exhortation to this pastor, in view of his fall, may well be considered as his exhortation to all others, who, like him, have allowed the fires of love kindled by the breath of divine love, to deaden into the smoldering embers of a cold formalism.

Verse 5. "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

"There can be no other duty for those who have fallen into the condition described. While the servant of God remains in this condition he can not labor as God has designed him to labor. He can not with confidence ask the assistance of that Spirit whose voice is constantly reproving him of sin and exhorting him to repent. Every word of entreaty,

every word of rebuke, every word of denunciation he utters, is echoed back, and he must hear God's words to him. "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things." (Rom. ii. 1.) For the sake of the cause of Christ, as well as for his own sake, this is the first duty which he owes to God. In the threat which follows we have the revelation of a truth which ought to inspire every servant of God with the utmost care and anxiety, and thus lead to the most perfect reliance upon God. "Or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." This is a threat to remove the church for the fault of the pastor. The reason is apparent. "Like priest, like people." A teacher can go no further than his own knowledge extends. The influence of the priestly doctrines may be perverted by the greater influence of a corrupt example. Numberless have been the instances when through the departure of the pastor from the truth and from the fire of love, the whole church has been plunged into darkness, and finally involved in ruin. The threat has been fulfilled. The *Church of Ephesus* has ceased to exist.* "One who lately visited Ephesus found only three Christians there, and those so ignorant as scarcely to have heard

* Trench.

the names of St. Paul or St. John." But there is one thing more for which he receives the divine approbation; and that is, that he, like his Master, "hates the deeds of the Nicolaitanes." What the deeds of the Nicolaitanes were is at present unknown, but doubtless they were well known at that time. They are generally supposed to be, however, a plurality of wives, as taught by Nicolas, one of the seven deacons.

Verse 7. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

This verse, as well as the corresponding one in each of the seven letters, is Christ's instruction as to the use to be made of this book. "He that hath an ear, let him hear." That is, let all who have an interest in future events attend to this revelation of them. So also, in the last part of the verse, a general promise is made, not to the pastor, not to the church, but to all men in all places and in all times. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God." The word rendered "garden of Eden" in English, is always rendered in the Septuagint *paradis*. In it originally grew the tree of life. But now it is transferred to the New Jerusalem, which is the paradise or garden of God. Into

it all who overcome and keep Christ's works to the end will have a right to enter, and eat of the tree of life.

THE SMYRNIAN LETTER.

Verse 8. "And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna, write: These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive."

Christ addresses this, the second letter of the series, to that illustrious minister of his word, Polycarp, pastor of the church in Smyrna. "And unto the angel of the church of Smyrna, write." This address is by Him who styles himself "the first and the last," and who declares that he "was dead and is alive." The letter is brief, but full of commendation of the one to whom it is addressed. "I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty (but thou art rich)." The world called him poor, but they saw not as Christ saw. He called him rich. "Blessed are ye poor," he said long before this letter was written, "for yours is the kingdom of heaven." Who can feel that they are poor in view of the riches of their Redeemer, and the promises made to them who through him are made the sons of God? "If sons, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ." "And I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not," &c. "He is not a Jew who is one outwardly," said Paul; "but he is a Jew who is one inwardly." So, likewise, Christ

evidently regarded the matter, and declares the mere outwardly Jewish professors to belong to "the synagogue of Satan." The object of these words is to condemn those Jews who not only calumniated Polycarp, but upon his martyrdom united their clamors with those of the heathen in demanding his death, and were personally active in hastening onward the awful tragedy.

Verses 10. "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer; behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days; be then faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

Both Polycarp and the church were to suffer, and hence Christ endeavored to certify both him and them. The church suffered persecution, and Polycarp martyrdom. "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer;" this is addressed alone to Polycarp. "*The devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days;*" this is addressed to the church. But "be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life," are words addressed to Polycarp.

This man was a disciple of the apostle John, and heard from his lips the story of Christ; and he was a cotemporary of Irenæus, who had the narrative from Polycarp's mouth. He died at the age of one hun-

dred, after having served Christ eighty-six years. For the greater portion of his Christian life he was pastor of the church of Smyrna. He was bold in his opposition to heretics, and tender toward the weak and feeble. "To Marcion," chief of the Docetæ, "who denied the humanity of Christ, and rejected the Old Testament," &c., who met him one day and said, "Polycarp, own us," he replied, "I do own you to be the first born of Satan."

When arrested and brought before the proconsul, he was told, "Reproach Christ and I will release you." "Eighty and six years have I served him, and he hath never wronged me; and how can I blaspheme my King, who has saved me?" said Polycarp. "I have wild beasts," said the proconsul. "Call them," was the intrepid reply. "I will tame your spirit with fire." "You threaten me with fire which burns for a moment and is soon extinct; but you are ignorant of the future judgment, and of the fire of eternal punishment reserved for the ungodly. But why do you delay? Do what you please," said the martyr.

Being brought to the stake he clasped his hands and said, "O Father," &c., "I bless thee that thou hast counted me worthy of this day and of this hour, to receive my portion in the number of martyrs in the cup of Christ, for the resurrection to eternal life both of soul and body, in the incorruption of the Holy Ghost," &c. Thus fell this blessed man of God, "faith-

ful unto death," that he might receive "a crown of life." Concerning him the learned Archbishop Usher says, "It is beyond all question that he was the angel of the church of Smyrna, to whom the Apocalyptical epistle was sent."

To what extent the persecution of the church of Smyrna extended at the time of the martyrdom of Polycarp, we have no means of knowing; but judging from the general account of his arrest, trial, and execution, it would not seem to have been long.

Verse 11. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."

We have here the same instruction as to the use of the book sent to Smyrna, as that given to the other pastors, viz., that all who have an ear should hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. As he who addresses this angel is the one who declares himself to have been once dead, but now alive forevermore, so he promises to all who overcome, that they "shall not be hurt of the second death."

THE PERGAMITE LETTER.

Verse 12. "And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write: These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges."

So directed he who was seen walking in the midst

of the seven golden candlesticks, out of whose mouth proceeded a sharp sword with two edges. The word of Christ is described as a sharp two-edged sword, "because it has a twofold bearing, a searching power so as to convict and convert some, and to convict and condemn to punishment others," as seen especially in the following verses.

Verse 13. "I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth."

Dwelling in such a place, he well knew the grace his servant needed to sustain him, and approved his course in holding fast the name of his Lord, and not denying his faith even in the midst of martyrdom, even in those days in which Antipas was slain. Who Antipas was is not known beyond what is here stated, that he was a faithful martyr of Pergamos.

Verse 14. "But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling-block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication."

Faithful as this man had been in maintaining his faith, Christ had a few things against him. 1. That he permitted those who held the doctrine of Balaam to have a place in the church.

Verse 15. "So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate."

So also, 2. He suffered those holding the Nicolaitane doctrine to remain in the church; and this, whatever the doctrine was, was hateful to Christ.

Verse 16. "Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth."

These offenses were of such magnitude that, unless repented of, his master, who announced himself as having the sharp sword, threatened to come to him quickly, and "fight against them with the sword of his mouth." This is a lesson to be remembered by all pastors — that they are set for the defense of the gospel, and that Christ holds them responsible to the extent of their ability to keep the church pure in faith and in practice, and that negligence of the interests of Christ's cause is sure to be visited with the severest reprehension.

Verse 17. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."

The same charge in reference to the revelations of the Spirit to the churches is given to this minister as to the others: "He that hath an ear, let him hear."

To the overcomer is made the promise of eating the *hidden manna*. This is spoken in reference to the golden pot of manna laid up in the ark of the covenant as a sample of what Israel subsisted on in the wilderness, and as the food of angels. We can not, in view of Christ's reference to this very thing in John vi. 31-35, as applying to himself, but regard this as in some way referring to the fruition of eternal life through him, given in the resurrection — a feasting upon its joys and sweets. Says a recent commentator, "As the manna hidden in the sanctuary was by divine power preserved from corruption, so Christ in his incorruptible body has passed into the heavens, and is hidden there until the time of his appearing. Christ himself is the manna hidden from the world, but revealed to the believer, so that he has already a foretaste of his preciousness. The full manifestation shall be at his coming. The glory of believers is now hidden, even as their meat is hidden. As the manna in the sanctuary, unlike the other manna, was incorruptible, so the spiritual dainties for Christ are everlasting; an incorruptible body and life forever in Christ at the resurrection."

So also he that overcomes is promised a white stone with a new name in it; a name unknown to any save the recipient. This is undoubtedly spoken in reference to one of the stones worn by the high priest in his breastplate; by which, in some way appointed by

God, he ascertained the divine will. On it was written some incommunicable name, known only by the high priest—a name supposed to have been that of Jehovah. So this stone has a name written in it—a name known only to him that receiveth it—a name of Christ.

THE THYATIRAN LETTER.

Verse 18. "And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass."

This angel of the church of Thyatira is addressed by the "Son of God" in name and person, so that there is no room left for doubt as to the being of the one symbolized by "one like unto the Son of Man," spoken of in the first chapter.

Verse 19. "I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first."

"The Son of God" declares to the angel of the church of Thyatira that he knows his works, love, faith, patience, and labors, and that they were increasing, so that "the last were more than the first"—a record of faithfulness which any minister might desire? and, which possessing, might well suppose to have been all required by the Lord; but Christ's words do not terminate here.

Verse 20. "Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols."

After all this praise Christ is compelled to utter words of reproof and blame. "I have a few things against thee," for suffering "that woman Jezebel to teach and to seduce my servants." 1. "To commit fornication." 2. "To eat things sacrificed to idols." These are inexcusable offenses in a minister or pastor. Who this woman was, any further than is here stated, we know not. Whether Jezebel was her proper name, or whether it was used because of her being so like Jezebel; the wife of king Ahab, we can not tell. But she professed to be a prophetess, and to teach these abominable things by the authority of divine inspiration.

Verse 21. "And I gave her space to repent of her fornication, and she repented not."

She was willfully perverse; not ignorant of the truth, nor unwarned. The Son of God had dealt leniently with her; he had waited for her to repent of her deceits and her filthiness, and turn to him; but all in vain.

Verse 22. "Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds."

Now comes the threat, "Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent." He does not even, after so long endurance, shut the door of mercy against either her or her paramours.

Verse 23. "And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the ruins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works."

He still further threatens her with the death of her children. The object of these inflictions is said to be that their fate might serve as a warning to all the churches, that they might know that he is not an uninterested spectator of their character and doings. He who has *eyes like a flame of fire* is the one who addresses this angel; and those piercing eyes search the reins and hearts of men, to give to every one according to his deeds.

Verse 24. "But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, As many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak, I will put upon you none other burden."

The division between this and the twenty-fifth verse renders the meaning of this passage somewhat perplexing and confused. If the first clause of verse 25 were included in verse 24, the idea would be more complete. Thus: "But unto you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine,

and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak, I will lay upon you none other burden than that which ye have."

Verse 25. "Hold fast till I come."

The burden which these excepted ones had to bear was a heavy and grievous one — to witness such a corruption in the name of religion, and to be unable to correct it. But the Savior encouraged them to hold fast their integrity, notwithstanding the severity of the trial, until he should come to deliver them and put away the evil. This is a duty devolving on all who are called upon to suffer, it matters not in what way, as long as they know they are walking near to Christ. Because of apostasies, that faith which makes alive should never be abandoned; because of evil report and reproach brought by erring brethren, we dare not abandon a hope begotten within by the Holy Ghost. God gave it: our duty is to hold it fast till he comes.

Verse 26. "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations."

The promise to the overcomers held out in this letter is very glorious. "I will give power over the nations." This is one of Christ's prerogatives, held out to him by his Father in the second psalm: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine in-

heritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." This dominion is to be shared in joint proprietorship by the overcomers.

Verse 27. "And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of my Father."

Here is a sure, perfect, and glorious triumph predicated for Christ on the authority of God's word; a power to rule over and break those who vainly thought "to break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from them;" a power which shall change the derisive shouts of "mocking soldiers bowing down" into laments and wails of sorrow at the sight of the victorious Lord, once cast out of Jerusalem in scorn and hate, returning as earth's glorious deliverer and everlasting king, before the wave of whose scepter "every knee shall bow," and "every tongue confess" that he is Christ, "to the glory of God the Father." It is a participation of his saints in this glorious triumph as one with Christ, sharers in his sufferings and death, which is comprehended in this wonderful promise. How encouraging to keep the work of Christ to the end, that we may be associated in his triumph at the last!

Verse 28. "And I will give him the morning star."

This is an obscure promise. Christ calls himself the "morning star" in chapter xxii. 16. Probably he

assumes this name because of his first rising to glory and immortality. May not this promise embrace the same thought, and mean that these overcomers shall be embraced in the hundred and forty-four thousand of first fruits unto God and the Lamb, who shall act as the glorious body-guard of Christ in his work of triumph? Chapter xiv. 1-5.

Verses 29. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

The same charge is here given as to all the other pastors.

CHAPTER III.

THE SARDIAN LETTER.

Verses 1-6. "And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He hath overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my

Father and before his angels. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

The character in which Christ addresses this pastor is as one who "hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars." The seven archangels are thus claimed by Christ to be under his control, or as belonging to his hierarchy. Thus "the seven spirits" and "the seven stars" combine to form representatives of the perfect lordship of heaven and earth—the one perfect head of all the universe of God. "For by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers. ALL THINGS WERE CREATED BY HIM AND FOR HIM."

What he claims to know of this minister's works is, that he has "a name to live, and is dead." The church and the world were sadly deceived in his character. But there were some signs of life remaining, which were about expiring, and which could only be saved by immediate attention to them, and giving them strength. His works had not been found perfect before God at any time. Unless he heeded this exhortation to watchfulness, Christ threatens to come on him as a thief; that is, suddenly and unexpectedly to punish him. But he is encouraged by the assurance that a few faithful ones remained in Sardis, who shall walk with Jesus in white.

To the overcomers are promised, in this letter, three things: 1. "They shall be clothed in white raiment." 2. "Christ will not blot out his name from the book of life." 3. The Savior "will confess his name in the presence of his Father and in the presence of his angels."

Again follows the same charge as to the importance of hearing "what the Spirit saith to the churches." The iteration and reiteration of this charge can not fail to suggest the degree of importance our glorified Redeemer and coming King seems to attach to the study and comprehension of this last book of the canon of revelation. Yet how few heed it! How many turn away with indifference from the grand panoramic series of events about to characterize the closing up of earth's long night of sin, and the introduction of the glorious and endless day of perfect sight! We can not but regard this indifference with surprise and pain, and indeed as, in view of these constant charges, really sinful in its nature.

THE PHILADELPHIAN LETTER. 1

Verses 7-13. "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for

thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. *Who* that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, *which* is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him* my new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

Christ here represents himself in four aspects. 1. "As the holy one." 2. As "he that is true." 3. As the one "that hath the key of David." 4. As he "that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth." When David's house was closed, and God pronounced the sentence, "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it" (Ezek. xxi. 27), and it was to be opened "no more until he came whose right it is" had come, it was to be given to him. By saying, "I have the key of David," he claims that he alone can restore the fallen house and throne, and bring back again the diadem kept in store for its glorious owner.

By these high titles he addresses the pastor of this

church, and declares himself acquainted with his works, as of all others. "He that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he who openeth and no man shutteth," informs this man that he has an open door before him, which shall remain open, giving as a reason, "for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name." For these reasons those false pretenders "which say they are Jews and are not, but do lie," should come and worship before his feet—not worship him, for that would be idolatry; but worship God at his feet; and they should know the fact that Christ had loved him.

"The hour of temptation" here spoken of was probably one of those general persecutions waged by the Roman emperors over all the οἰκουμένη, the Roman dominion, to try the saints. But from this temptation, on account of his faithfulness, this man was to be kept.

"Behold, I come quickly." This word, ταχὺ, rendered *quickly* in the English version, would be better translated "suddenly." This is equally warranted by the meaning and use of the word, and by the general teachings of Christ and his apostles as to the suddenness with which he will come in the clouds of heaven. *Quickly* conveys the idea of a short time from this, while *suddenly* imports the sudden manner of his

coming whenever it does take place. For this reason we prefer the rendering of *suddenly*, wherever this word occurs in a like connection in this book.

The important exhortation to hold fast, that no one should take the crown designed for him at Christ's coming, is an advice equally applicable to us all.

The promises here made to the overcomers are:

1. "I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God, and he never shall go out." That is, in the great spiritual temple, which is *growing* toward perfection here, to be completed in the other world, when shall be "brought forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it" (Zech. iv. 7): these overcomers shall be set as pillars in posts of honor and glory. 2. "I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, now Jerusalem." 3. "I will write upon him my new name." Thus are his titles to all the joys of eternity assured beyond the shadow of a doubt—a right to be forever regarded as God's children; a right to a habitation in the new Jerusalem; and an eternal unity with Christ. Thus does God counterbalance the evils with the good he promises; thus does he show us the meaning of the assurance he has given us that "these light afflictions, which last but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

Then the epistle closes with the commendation of the Spirit's testimony to the churches, as found in this book, "to every one who hath an ear."

THE LAODICEAN LETTER.

Verses 14-21. "And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and ancient thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock. If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

The characteristics by which Christ describes himself to this angel are, 1. "The Amen;" the confirmer of all that God has said, and the pledge of the fulfillment of all his words. 2. "The faithful and true witness." This title harmonizes with the former, "the

Amen," and also with the following address. "As the Amen" expresses the unchangeable truth of his promises, so "the faithful and true witness," the truth of his revelations as to the things he has seen and testified.

3. "The beginning of the creation of God." The word *αρχη*, translated *beginning*, in this verse has a more proper rendering in the word *beginner*, as translated by Professor N. N. Whiting. "Not he whom God created first, but as in Col. i. 15-18, the beginner of all creation, its originating instrument. All creation would not, could not, be represented as adoring him if he was one of themselves." *

His knowledge of this angel is, 1. That he is lukewarm. 2. That he makes false representations of himself by saying that he is rich and increased in goods, and has need of nothing; whereas Christ discovers him to be entirely the reverse of this, — "wretched, miserable, poor, blind, naked." For all these evils Christ prescribes a remedy. 1. "Buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich." 2. "Buy of me white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed." 3. "Buy of me eye-salve, that thou mayest see." So that, bad as was the case of the pastor, it was not beyond remedy. On the contrary, if he would obey the instructions here given, it was very hopeful. His master did not speak thus sharply to him because he was angry, but

because of his love for him. "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten." Why then should he not be zealous, and repent of his pride and lukewarmness, and secure his Master's approval, and receive him as his guest, that they might feast together? And what was for him is for all others in a like condition.

The great promise here made to the overcomers is to sit with Christ on his throne, as he for the same reason now sits with his Father upon his throne. Thus the throne of Christ is here shown to be still *intact*. He still occupies that position taken by him when God said to him, "Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." This position he leaves only when he goes forth to glorify his saints and subdue his foes, and on the ruins of earth's fallen dynasties erects forever the fallen tabernacles of David. Again, for the seventh time, the charge is reiterated to him that "hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches."

THE NATURE OF THE SEVEN LETTERS.

The foregoing exposition accepts the letters to the seven angels as expressing literally the state of things then existing in regard to the character and administration of the seven men who were then pastors of those seven churches. All is natural and easy when regarded in this light. But every attempt to allego-

rize the seven churches (not one of which is addressed in these letters), and make them represent the church of Christ under seven distinct periods of the Christian dispensation, plunges us at once into confusion and uncertainty. If there is any such design in the letters, it is the angels of the churches, and not the churches themselves, who are the representatives; and all interpretations based on the hypothesis that it is the churches which are addressed are unfounded, and must, if the theory is true at all, be re-written on the true basis.

The approvals, disapprovals, reproofs, and exhortations, together with the criticisms of Christ on the pastoral administration of these ministers, as also his indications of the order in the churches which he approves or disapproves, are so many lessons of instruction for all ministers of the gospel to observe, in all ages. And thus these letters are of importance to the whole church in all time.

Let the reader, then, keep in mind that the seer was to write his book under three heads — *the things thou hast seen, the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter*. Then he will see recorded in the first chapter, what John had seen; in the second and third, existing things; and in the fourth and onward, the things to come after these — the scenes of the day of the Lord.

CHAPTER IV.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE JUDGMENT COURT AND
OPENING OF THE JUDGMENT DAY.

Verses 1-5. After this I looked, and behold, a door *was* opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard *was* as it were of a trumpet talking with me: which said, Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the Spirit: and behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and *there was* a rainbow round about the throne in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats; and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings, and thunderings, and voices. And *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God."

This chapter opens a new scene, the third class of events of which the seer was commanded to write, "The things which shall be hereafter." The opening of this scene was laid in heaven, whither John was called, and went *in spirit*. "Come up hither," said the voice, as a door was opened in heaven. "Immediately," he says, "I was *in spirit*" out of the body, entranced. The scene he saw was "a throne set in heaven" and God the Father seated on it; the scene

here being the same as that described by Daniel in the seventh chapter of his prophecy, where he saw the "Ancient of Days" seated on his throne as supreme judge.

This must not be regarded as an ordinary scene, or the normal state of heaven; for the promise to the seer was *to show him things which must be hereafter*. So that, whatever they were, they were to follow the time when he had this vision, about A. D. 96. Nothing can be taken back of that period. This is an important point gained in the interpretation of the Apocalypse. The chronology of the vision is to be fixed by collating it with Dan. vii. 9, 10. The prophet had described the four beasts, the symbols of the four kingdoms of earth. In describing the fourth beast, he said, "And the beast had ten horns," and "among them there came up another little horn, that had eyes as the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things." After the rise of these horns,—not before,—and while the little horn is speaking his great words, this judgment is introduced. "I beheld until the thrones were cast down," or, as critics affirm, "firmly set," for the judgment to begin; "and the Ancient of Days did sit." That is, God the Father took his seat of judgment. But he does not sit alone, for there are thrones, implying associate judges, as well as the one supreme judge. And this is illustrated in the chapter under consideration, the fourth of Revelation, where

the twenty-four thrones are introduced as surrounding the throne of God, which thrones are filled by twenty-four elders, clothed in white robes and wearing golden crowns.

But it is before this court, as described by Daniel, that the Son of Man is brought and introduced, and receives his royal investiture over all kingdoms and dominions, world without end.

It is also in this court described by Daniel "the judgment was set and the books were opened." The passages, then, are evidently parallel, referring to the same time and event.

The "thunderings, lightnings, and voices" proceeding out of the throne are symbols of judgment. The seven spirits of God which wait before the throne are there as if in readiness to hear and execute the orders of the heavenly court. These are assigned to the Lamb as his messengers, and are then represented as seven horns of the Lamb, instead of the seven lamps before the throne. It is as horns of the Lamb that they are sent forth into all the earth (ch. v., vi.). Thus they constitute Christ's *hierarchy*, or heavenly dignitaries.

Verses 6-11. "And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes, before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts

had each of them six wings about *him*; and *they were* full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory, and honor, and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

The crystalline sea before the throne is no doubt the pattern from which Moses was directed to form the brazen sea to accompany the tabernacle in the wilderness; for it, the tabernacle, was patterned after the heavenly things in all its parts.

The four beasts described in this passage have been commented on to a large extent, and various have been the solutions of the mystery of their being, identity, and work: They are identical with the seraphim described in the sixth of Isaiah. They, too, are attendants on the throne of God, as are the twenty-four elders, and seem to be a part of the court. Both elders and seraphim (living creatures we will call them, for such the word *ζων* signifies), as we shall learn in chapter v., are in this court as representatives of the saints; they constitute two orders, or houses, but mostly act jointly in the part which they have to perform. The general separate part which they enact

is, to proclaim continually the holiness of the Almighty, — precisely the same employment in which Isaiah saw them engaged, as described in the sixth chapter of his prophecy. Then they stood *above* the throne of God; now, when the judgment sits, they surround the throne in the midst of the circle of elders, sitting in assize. What the meaning of the differing faces is, or of their being full of eyes, &c., we, probably, shall never comprehend until we are taught of God in a better state than this; and so we leave them as they are here revealed.

Both living creatures and elders unite in giving glory, and honor, and thanks to him that sitteth on the throne, the elders worshiping him and casting their crowns before his throne in token of their most perfect subjection. They unite also in ascribing to him who occupies the supreme throne, worthiness to preside there, because he is the originator of the universe; the one for whose pleasure all things exist and were created. These elders seem to be human, and are probably some of those who came from the graves after Christ's resurrection.

Such is the constitution of the supreme court which is to adjudicate and adjust, on principles of the strictest equity, the affairs of this world, and introduce a new and better state of things.

The judicial arrangements being thus completed, the executive department is the next to be arranged,

and this is presented to us in the next chapter. As we proceed with its consideration we shall see that it, too, corresponds with the prophecy of Daniel (seventh chapter), where the Son of Man is invested with executive power by the court, and that power is to be "forever and ever." So also we shall find it in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V.

INTRODUCTION, ELECTION, AND INVESTITURE OF CHRIST WITH EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY.

Verses 1-5. "And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel, proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof."

When God first created man, he invested him in due form with the universal dominion of earth and all its creatures, as well as those in its air and sea. All, all, were placed under him, and thus he became earth's monarch, invested by God with the right to rule. So

also will the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, the Son of Man, be invested with the same power and rights. Thus we read, "For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, 'What is man, that thou art mindful of him or the Son of Man, that thou visitest him?' Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him." Hebrews ii. 3-8.

The scene of this chapter opens in heaven, as in the one preceding it, which we have considered. The same throne; the same occupant, the same elders, and same living creatures, are all present to attend on the business of the court. The presiding judge holds in his hand a sealed book, sealed with seven seals. This seems to be full of writing within and on its back, and its contents, as we learn on the opening of the seals, are the judgments or findings of the court, to be executed by authority of the Lamb. The question, who will take the book, open the seals, and learn and execute these findings, comes before the court; and a herald angel is sent out to make proclamation with a loud voice, through the universe, for a man com-

petent to do this work, and returns with the report, that no man either in heaven or earth, or in the under world, is worthy or competent to undertake or execute it. So that the whole proceeding seems about to be stayed for the want of such an one. The intense interest of the seer caused him to weep profusely because of this failure. At this point one of the twenty-four elders comforts him by introducing "the Lion of the tribe of Juda" as one worthy of the task, and competent to perform it.

Verses 6, 7. "And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne."

We can not do better than here give the reader the benefit of the eloquent comments of Rev. Dr. Seiss on this passage: "He who appears here as a Lamb is the same whom the elder had just described as a Lion. The two titles might seem to be incongruous. What more opposite than the monarch of the forest, in strength and majesty, inflicting terror and death, and the lamb, in its uncomplaining meekness, in the hands of the sacrificer? But the two pictures do not conflict. They supplement each other, and combine to bring out what could not be otherwise so well por-

trayed, and yet what the nature of the case required. The opening of the seals is an act of strength—an exploit of war—a going forth of power to take possession of a kingdom. As one after another is broken, out flies a strong one in fierce assault upon the enemies and usurpers who occupy the earth. There is terror and destruction at every successive movement. And in the accomplishment of this, Christ is a lion, clothed with power, and majesty, and terribleness. But the character in which he overcame, and became in that respect qualified for this work, and that in which he presents himself before the throne as a candidate to be adjudged worthy to do it, is that of the sacrificial lamb, who had innocently and meekly suffered, bearing our sins in his own body, and vanquishing all legal disabilities by his atoning blood. It is in the character of a lamb that was slain, who overcame by his perfect obedience unto death, and who paid the price of redemption in his meek sufferings, that he is adjudged “worthy to take the book, and to open the seals of it.” It is by his sacrifice as a lamb slain that he comes to the further qualifications for the further office of a lion, to assert and enforce his supremacy. So, as the conquering lamb, he takes the book from the hand of him that sitteth on the throne, that he may open the seals, and lion-like go forth to his conquests.

Verses 8-10. "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts, and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints. And they sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."

The same beings, elders and living creatures, who declared the Father worthy to preside in the court, now fall before the Lamb, on his assumption of the sealed book, and cast their suffrages for him as the executor of the court's findings.

Both classes are furnished with harps, for their suffrage is to be given in song. "They sang a new song." They also have, each of them, "golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of the saints;" so they appear there to represent, not themselves, but the expressed wishes of the saints, and utter them in song. From the common version no other idea can be gained than that they represent themselves in their ode, — "Hast redeemed us," "and made us unto our God kings and priests." But clearly the *living creatures* are not of human kind; and yet they, as well as the elders, join in the song. The revised reading of the American Bible Union gives this, as being, after all their research, in their judgment the best

sustained: "Thou wast slain, and didst redeem to God by thy blood out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation; and didst make them [thus redeemed] unto our God a kingdom and priests, and they shall reign on the earth."

This relieves us from the difficulty of making the seraphim classify themselves among the redeemed by Christ's blood, and makes both classes representative characters speaking for the saints. Their unanimous consent is given for the slain Lamb to proceed with the executive work. They being representatives of saints at that court, all saints are bound by their action.

THE ANGELIC SUFFRAGE.

Verses 11, 12. "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

The elders and living ones having given their suffrages for the Lamb as the one who is worthy of this high function, all the angelic host next file into court and surround the whole group; God the Father on the throne, the Lamb in the midst of the four living ones, and the circle of four and twenty elders seated on their thrones surrounding and enclosing the others;

and these, too, pronounce the verdict thus given, just and good, saying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and blessing."

Here we pause, because so compelled by the common English version. But if we follow the Syriac, the earliest translation ever made from the Greek, we shall not make a full pause, as at the end of a sentence. The Syriac reads, "and to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and blessing; and [to be over] (*Verse 13*) every created thing which is in the heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them. And I heard the one who sitteth upon the throne saying, And unto the Lamb be the blessing, and the honor, and the glory, and the power, for ever and ever."

Verse 14. "And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshiped him that liveth for ever and ever."

"And the four living creatures said Amen: and the elders fell down and adored." Thus living ones, elders, and angels are of one accord in pronouncing the Lamb worthy of this high honor of more than filling the place of the first Adam; and he who sits upon the throne of this high court, God the Father, pronounces the judgment of investiture, according to the unanimous verdict of the gathered court.

But this Syriac rendering is not without its difficulty. It is not justified by any known Greek manuscript. What manuscripts they had, which we have not, we do not know; but doubtless they had what they regarded as good authority for the rendering they gave. Another rendering, differing somewhat from the Syriac, and which is justified by the Greek text, is as follows; it is in part the rendering of the Syriac: "And [to be over] every created thing which is in the heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth, and such as are upon the sea, and the things in them." "And I heard all [elders, living ones, and angels] saying to him who sitteth upon the throne, And [let there be] unto the Lamb the blessing, and the honor, and the glory, and the power, for ever and ever."

This invocation by the attendants on the throne is in accordance with what they had already declared the Lamb to be worthy. "And the four living ones said, Amen. And the elders fell down and worshipped."

To the present translation we have many objections, the principal one of which, however, will suffice. Undoubtedly as the rendering now stands in our common English version, there would seem to be implied a universal confession of Christ, and ascriptions of glory, honor, and praise to him, as the one who was slain; and that at a time when the whole earth is

overtly filled with deceit, hatred, murder, and open rebellion against the very things they are thus made to honor. A glance at the chronology of this event will show us that prior to the opening of even the first of the book taken from the hand of the slain, as yet, not the first act of judgment is coming under those seals. We are deceived that the period can not be the "last great day, and hence, that the universe" is shorn of its strength. We explain it on the same principle on which we explain all the other things on all creatures and all the elements of the universe to God. (Psalm cxlviii.) But this seems to be a forced construction. The translation, as we have indicated above, perfectly relieves the passage of embarrassment.

The Lamb being thus invested with this high authority, by the august court composed of all known holy intelligences, is to occupy the place of the first Adam as supreme head of all created things, and here receives the gift promised him with such strong assurances in the second Psalm.

CHAPTER VI.

THE OPENING OF THE SEALS.

THIS chapter unfolds, or commences the unfolding of the executive judgments. If chapters four and five are correctly interpreted as representing the judicial and executive departments of the day of judgment, then chapter six unfolds the executive proceeding.

We learn from the seventh chapter of Daniel that judgment is in session in heaven that the little horn, to whom times, and laws, and saints are subjected "till a time, times, and the dividing of a time," speaks his great words, and makes war on the saints, and prevails against them. So the first thought on the appearance of the white horse and his crowned rider here, is, that it represents Christ, because he is clearly thus represented in chapter xix. 11, 12. But there he has many crowns, and is called "the word of God." This is an imitator of Christ, — *the Antichrist*, — going forth to the conquest of the world, and to make war on the saints, and thus "judgment begin at the house of God." The second, third, and fourth seals, reveal his instruments.

THE FIRST SEAL.

Verses 1, 2. "And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were, the voice of

thnnder, one of the four beasts, saying, Come and see. And I saw, and behold, a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering and to conquer."

On the opening of the first seal, we are told that it was followed by the voice of one of the four living creatures, sounding like the voice of thnnder, saying, Come and see. But it is now conceded that the reading should be modified by the omission of the last two words, "and see," leaving the verso to read, "I heard one of the four beasts, saying, Come;" thus being simply a call for the conqueror to enter on his work; and forthwith the white horse, with his crowned and conquering rider, appears with a bow in his hand, the symbol of conquest. But he is not to work alone.

THE SECOND SEAL.

Verses 3, 4. "And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword."

Another of the seals is opened, and the second living creature with a loud voice cried, "Come." At this cry came forth a red horse, and to his rider was given a great sword: and his mission was to "take peace from the earth," and that men should kill one another. This was one of the functions of the Beast of chapter

13, to kill and destroy. "Who is able to make war with him?" A general state of war is the result of the opening of this second seal.

THE THIRD SEAL.

Verses 5, 6. "And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo, a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine."

These verses describe the opening and the results following the opening of the third seal, attended with the voice of the third living creature, who also cried, "Come." And a black horse appeared, and to his rider was given a ζυγον, yoke, not a pair of balances, as commonly translated. A yoke is a symbol of slavery. It is the function of this rider to enslave the conquered and bind them to the conqueror.

And this symbol of a yoke, and the fact set forth in the succeeding clauses, are seen to perfectly harmonize. Being conquered and enslaved, the rations of a slave are measured out to them — "A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny," a day's rations for the price of a day's labor of a slave. "And see that thou hurt not the oil and the wine;" that is, the luxuries, the portions of the

conquerors. This is the order of one of the living ones. So that, as Dr. Seiss remarks, "Price lists are made in heaven."

Verses 7, 8. "And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold, a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth."

The opening of the fourth seal was followed by the order of the fourth living one, saying, "Come." Then came forth a pale horse, and Death was his rider. Following him were the inhabitants of Hades, overspreading the earth, and exciting the most furious passions.

This seal introduces the war of the little horn against the saints, in which they are to be killed upon the fourth part of the earth, "with the sword, and with famine, and with death, and by the beasts of the earth."

Hades, in this passage, is put by synecdoche for the inhabitants of Hades, the demons who so intensely hate Christ and his people. We are, without doubt, witnessing some of the developments of those supernatural agencies in spiritualistic works; works hated by God and to be feared by men, tending directly to the excitement of the foulest passions dwelling in the

human breast. Hideous in its deformity as it now is, it has not yet sounded the depths of its awful depravity; but when this seal is opened the system will have reached its maturity. It is by these agencies "some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white." "They shall fall by sword and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil many days," under the "vile person's" persecution. (Daniel xi.)

Verses 9-11. "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled."

As the first four seals were opened, a horse and his rider were called forth by one of the living ones; the first a conquering king, the three following ones representing his agents. The first agent of the crowned conqueror was to take peace from the earth, and introduce war for purposes of conquest. The second agent of the conquering king has a yoke, to hold the conquered in bondage to his master, subjecting to strict and meager rations. The third agent, he

who comes forth at the call of the fourth living one, is Death, and his minions from Hades, to make war on and destroy the saints.

But when the other seals are opened, no more agents of the king are called or come forth; for they are all abroad and engaged in their work. But the result of their action, especially the one under the fourth seal, is exhibited. The souls of the martyrs are seen by John, "under" or below "the altar" which is before God in heaven. But their number is not yet complete, and the work of death yet goes on. Thus we read in response to their inquiry, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" "that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." Thus these disembodied spirits are seen to be in a state of conscious expectancy, awaiting a coming day of vengeance on their foes. "And there was given a white robe unto every one of them." These robes are long, flowing, priestly *stoles*, not the common *himation*, or garment. None among all the redeemed but these martyrs have promise of the *stole*, or are represented as wearing it. The overcomers of chapter iii. 5 have the promise of "*ἡμῶν λευκοίς*," white garments. But to martyrs belong the *stole*. (Chapter vii. 9, 13, 14.)

From these facts we learn that the work of the several seals is not strictly consecutive, but is, at least to some extent, contemporaneous. For the work of the preceding seal is still in progress when the fifth is opened. And so the works of the second, third, and fourth seals are but so many parts of the conquests of the crowned rider of the white horse. Thus we see the force of the phrase found in chapter i. 1, "things which must be done WITH CELERITY," or in a rapid manner.

THE OPENING OF THE SIXTH SEAL.

Verses 12-17. "And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood: And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

We are informed in verse 11 that the day of vengeance will not come until the full number of

martyrs is made up. But under the sixth seal, as in verse 17, we are told that "the great day of his wrath hath come." Consequently the events of the sixth seal are subsequent to all the others, and are the signal that the persecutions of the saints are at an end. The war of the little horn will then have terminated. Therefore the scene here described is the "*coming of the Ancient of Days*." It is "the sign of the Son of Man in heaven," which is to "immediately" follow "the tribulation of those days." (Matt. xxiv. 30.) Then the dominion of the little horn over the saints will be taken away. But it by no means follows that he will cease to exist and reign over the conquered nations. For he will do so until the battle of that great day of God Almighty, which will not take place until Christ shall have come in the clouds of heaven and taken his people to himself; celebrated the marriage supper of the Lamb with them in the new Jerusalem; and then returns with the armies of heaven to conquer a peace, and cast the beast alive into the lake of fire. This scene, and Matt. xxiv. 29, 30, will be seen by the attentive reader to be identical; the last clause of verse 30, "and they shall see the Son of Man coming," &c., properly belonging to verse 31.

The scene here described is panoramic in its nature.

1. The great earthquake levels and removes all

obstructions to vision — "mountains and islands" — by removing them from their places.

2. The "lights" of the world are hidden in the darkness of night, that only the coming scene may be witnessed.

3. The curtain of the heavens is rolled up, and the judgment sitting in heaven exhibited to all the earth — "*The sign of the Son of Man.*"

The description here given is more definite and full than that given by Christ. He said, "Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn." But here we are shown how it will affect them. "The kings of the earth," &c., "hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains; and they said to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?"

The world will then be satisfied of the truth of the doctrine of a day of judgment, and that Christ is coming in person — a doctrine at which many, if not all of them, will have mocked and derided. But the scene is only a temporary one, and Nature will resume her wonted course again; and the wicked, finding that the saints still remain, will be ashamed of their fright, and laugh at their mortal fear, and so, instead of spending the days and passing the nights in earnest prayers for forgiveness for their sinful thoughts and

deeds, will go back to their old employments, indulge in their old pleasures, undeterred by past alarms, unprevented by future fears.

CHAPTER VII.

SEALING THE SERVANTS OF GOD.

Verses 1-8. "And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and *there were sealed a hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Juda, . . . of the tribe of Reuben, . . . of the tribe of Gad, . . . of the tribe of Aser, . . . of the tribe of Nepthalim, . . . of the tribe of Manasse, . . . of the tribe of Simeon, . . . of the tribe of Levi, . . . of the tribe of Issachar, . . . of the tribe of Zabulon, . . . of the tribe of Joseph, . . . of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand,*" [of each tribe named].

The events of this chapter transpire under the sixth seal, and follow the scenes described in the close of chapter sixth, "After these things;" so that these things were only temporary, and the world

resumes its wonted course. God has his angels appointed to various places and diverse service. The four angels holding the four winds implies that they are set to restrain the agents of destruction until all things are in readiness for their action. The angel with the seal of the living God is commissioned to mark them who are worthy of it, for deliverance from impending judgments, and for deliverance from the earth, as we shall see when we come to the consideration of chapters ix. and xiv. Until they are sealed the judgments must be stayed.

The number sealed was stated, in the seer's hearing, to be one hundred and forty-four thousand; twelve thousand from each of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. They seem to be a select company of converted Jews, of great moral purity, appointed and prepared as a body-guard for Christ. That the Jews alone are intended, appears from the specific mention of the names of the tribes from which they are to be taken. The number is definite; twelve thousand from each tribe designated; one hundred and forty-four thousand the sum total. The seal impresses on them the name of God. Does the reader ask where so many of the lost tribes are found? the answer is, man knows but little of the numbers of those tribes, nor where they are; but they are known to God. When he banished them he said, "I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations like as corn

is sifted in a sieve. Yet shall not the least grain fall to the earth." (Amos ix. 9.) God has never lost sight of them, although they have vanished from the sight of man; they do not know their own pedigree, or relation to Jacob. What portions of existing nations are of Israel's tribes who can say? There are, according to the latest estimates, about eleven or twelve millions of recognized Jews in the world, mostly of the house of Judah. The thirty-six thousand from Judah, Benjamin, and the tribe of Manasseh, would be small for so many millions. But God "will count when he writes" (or enrolls) the people, that this man was born there," &c. That is, he will recognize nationality and tribeship in his registration. Saved Jews will be Jews still, and be able to say, as Paul did, "I am verily a man which am a Jew," Christian though he was. The election among that race, however, are still beloved of God "for the fathers' sakes." This number of sealed ones, and those of chapter xiv. 1-5, are no doubt identical." But it does not follow that no others but the one hundred and forty-four thousand were sealed. All the living saints will be sealed. (Rev. xxii. 4.)

THE PALM BEARERS.

Verses 9-17. "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white

robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshiped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him; Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

After the view of the sealed multitude had passed away, he saw, before the throne in heaven, another multitude, greater than any man could number, out of all the races and nations of the earth. It will be remarked that they were clothed as were the souls under the altar, who, under the fifth seal, were to rest until their number was full. At the appearance of the throne, and the elders in mid heaven, under the sixth seal, that number was completed; and from that time

no more will suffer the fate of martyrdom. Their rest ends, and the whole number of *martyr souls* stand before the throne in white robes; and, added to them, palms, emblems of victory, in their hands. Having gained the victory, they sing of salvation, saying, "Salvation to our God, which sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb." To this grand chorus of joy the angels join their song of praise, ascribing "blessing, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honor, power, and might" unto him that sits on the throne "for ever." Thus shall saints and angels unite in songs of praise at the ending of the sufferings of God's children; long endurance shall meet its reward in everlasting joy; the good warfare in triumph over all foes; the prayer of the sufferer be exchanged for the song of the conqueror, and all heaven ring with the glad acclaim.

The question of one of the elders was evidently put to John to secure his attention to its true answer. "These" (οἱ ἱμηνεύοντες) "*the ones having been clothed in the white stoles*" (referring to the stoles which were given the waiting souls of the martyrs), "what are they, and whence came?" His explanation to his own question was, "These are they who come out of the tribulation the great;" the same "great tribulation" of Matt. xxiv. 21, 29. "And they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and they serve him day and night in his

temple; and he that sits on the throne shall spread his tabernacle over them."

Their sorrows and exposures are for ever ended, tears wiped away, and "the Lamb is their shepherd, and shall lead them to the water of the fountain of life." In this state of blessedness they await the resurrection, as promised in chapter xx. It is to this blessed state "the dead who die in the Lord," during the beasts' war upon them, are referred in chapter xiv. 13, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth." Why so blest? There are two reasons 1. They rest from their (*κοπών*) extreme toils and exhaustive weariness. It is difficult to express the full import of the word. It is something of what an army feels after a long and severely contested battle, or series of battles — such as, to illustrate, the army felt after the seven days' conflict before Richmond — perfectly worn out and overdone. 2. "Their works do follow them;" they are receiving the fruit, the seed of which was sown during life in laborious work and arduous toil for Christ, before the throne in such bliss and enjoyment as God alone can afford. If the dead are unconscious, there can be to them no blessedness such as is promised or here pronounced by the Spirit on those who die in the Lord; and thus the word of God gives an impression for which there is no foundation in fact, and we may say, or in reason.

The theory of the pre-resurrection and translation

of the saints is sometimes sought to be sustained by this passage. That is, that the saints of this dispensation, living and dead, will be caught away silently before the visible appearance of Christ, "in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory;" and before "he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds." In other words, that the rapture of the saints will take place before the great tribulation. If this latter view is correct, then the great multitude, who came out of the tribulation, the great, cannot be the ones who are raptured before it. The resurrection of the martyrs is introduced in the twentieth chapter — not before. These, therefore, are their souls, no longer under the altar in heaven, as they were under the fifth seal, but their number being complete, they stand before the throne. There is no resurrection or rapture of the saints promised until *after* the great tribulation caused by Antichrist.

Christ, as already quoted, places the gathering of the elect after it; and so likewise does Paul in 2 Thess. ii. He addresses a Gentile church, and classes himself with them, thus: "Now we beseech you, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our gathering together unto him, that ye be not soon shaken in mind, nor be troubled . . . as that the day of Christ is at hand," or "has come," as some read it. "For that day [of Christ's coming and

our gathering together unto him, shall not come except there come a falling away from the church of sin be revealed . . . whom the Lord shall . . . destroy by the brightness of his coming." The white-robed palm-bearers are already before the throne, at the time of the sealing of the one hundred and forty-four thousand Israelites, and before their translation. But the sealed ones are still on earth under the fifth trumpet, protected by the seal from the scourge of locusts. But in chapter xiv. 1-5, they are, "with the Lamb," singing "before the throne," "redeemed from the earth," and "from among men," "the first fruits unto God and the Lamb." If the body of the saints of this dispensation have preceded them, they can not be termed the first fruits, and therefore the general rapture has not taken place, and the white-robed multitude are the souls of the martyrs in heaven before the throne.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SEVENTH SEAL OPENED.

Verse 1. "And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour."

This verse properly belongs to the seventh chapter. Instead of action, as under the opening of the other seals, there is profound silence. The voice of the

great multitude who sang before the throne the song of salvation, the voice of the angelic choristers who joined the heavenly melody, yea, and all heaven, is hushed, and profound silence reigns through all the abode of God. A crisis has been reached in the proceedings, and a new scene is to be introduced. The constitution of this book is somewhat on the plan of a panoramic exhibition of a battle-field. The different scenes are not always successive in their fulfillment, as they are in their exhibition. They may consist of events which transpired at the same moment in different places; but being all to be exhibited to one audience, they must necessarily be exhibited part by part. We have, in the opening of the seven seals, witnessed a series of judgments and triumphs. A new series is to be introduced, to transpire at the same time with the events of the seals, at least in part, for the actors under the seals are also, in some measure, actors under the trumpets. For instance, under the sixth seal a certain class of men have the seal of God placed on their forehead to insure their safety. They appear under the fifth trumpet sealed, and their seal gives them protection. It is, then, in reference to the preparation for the new scene, the silence occurs.

THE SEVEN TRUMPETS.

Verse 2. "And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets."

Here different actors are introduced. Unlike the opening of the seals is the sounding of the trumpets. In the former instance the Lamb himself opened the seals of the book; but the sounding of the trumpets was committed to angelic ministration. "*The seven angels which stood before God.*" This is a reference to the "seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth," represented by the seven eyes and the seven horns of the Lamb. (See chapter v. 6.) Their mission is to sound the signal for the infliction of sore judgments upon the earth. The preparations for their sounding are various, and minutely described by John, as the scene was shown to him.

Verses 3-5. "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and an earthquake."

Another angel, not one of the seven, "came and stood at the altar" in heaven, the one from which Moses took his pattern in the wilderness; for that was a pattern of heavenly things. This angel had a golden censer; he therefore was of a priestly order. To him was given "much incense, that he should offer

[give] it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne." In the tabernacle service there were two altars; one the great altar of burnt offerings without the tabernacle, and the other the golden altar, the altar of incense within the tabernacle, near the entrance of the most holy place, where the Shekinah dwelt, on the mercy seat. On this altar of incense, in the court of heaven, the prayers of all saints were to be offered, perfumed with much incense. We have before found these prayers reserved in *golden vials*, and intrusted to the hands of the representatives of the saints, the elders, and living creatures. The time has at length arrived when they are to come up before God. Not that they have not been before heard; they have, and have been kept in remembrance until the time for their answer should fully arrive; this is the appointed time, and so they are represented, as coming up afresh before God, perfumed with the smoke of the burning incense. Long centuries the saints, with united heart and voice, have prayed, as Jesus directed, "Thy kingdom come." Long it has seemed, and yet they are not answered. But as we have seen, they are neither lost nor forgotten. But their answer implies dreadful judgments on the earth. And at length they fall. The angel having offered his incense, and having thus emptied his censer, fills it with fire from the altar, and casts it into the earth from heaven. The result is voices,

thunderings and lightnings, and an earthquake, These ceremonies having been completed, "the seven angels prepared to sound." They arranged among themselves the order of their work, for it was to be successive, one after the other.

DEPARTMENTS OF JUDGMENT UNDER THE SEVEN TRUMPETS.

The judgments inflicted under the trumpets are : under the first, on the earth, burning trees and grass, leaving it desolate and parched. Under the second trumpet, the sea is affected, its living creatures die, and its ships are destroyed. Under the third trumpet, the rivers and fountains of water are made bitter, so that many drinking of them die. Under the fourth trumpet, the luminaries of heaven are smitten, and their light made dim. Thus the four departments of nature, earth, sea, fountains, and luminaries of heaven are affected.

The next three are woes on men.

The fifth inflicts terrible torments.

The sixth inflicts an awful death.

The seventh arraigns men in judgment before God.

Verse 7. "The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth : and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up."

The result following the sounding of this trumpet

was "hail and fire mingled with blood." This was in part — the fire and the hail — one of the plagues of Egypt, sent as judgments upon a perverse and willful king. That blood should be mingled with it is nothing strange, for bloody showers have fallen at divers times both in this and other lands, authentic accounts of which are still in existence. The effect of this judgment will be the burning up of one third part of the trees and all green grass. It may be objected, perhaps, that such things are exceedingly improbable, and can never literally transpire; but whoever can have faith in the literality of the plagues of Egypt can have no difficulty in believing in the literality of this prediction.

Verses 8, 9. "And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed."

The mountain, *as it were*, burning with fire, was cast into the sea. It is not a real mountain. "It is only something having the general appearance of a mountain, and he plainly tells us so. He saw — *as it were* — a mountain. Of course, then, we are to take it not as a real mountain, but as something resembling it. A certain writer insists that the plague under this trumpet is not to be taken literally,

because a mountain falling into the sea could never turn it into blood. But Jehn does not say it was a mountain. He says that it was something that *looked like a burning mountain*. Exactly what it was he could no better tell us, except that its effect upon the waters of the sea was, that it turned them into blood. An ordinary mountain would not do this; but that falling, fiery mass, which had the appearance of a burning mountain, did it."* The incredibility of such a description, in itself considered, no one will deny; but when it is remembered that the whole scene is of a miraculous nature, sent as a judgment from heaven upon a wicked world, there need be no more difficulty in accepting the literality of the statement than in believing the statement of the Pentateuch concerning the rivers of Egypt turned into blood; thus we read of Moses, that he "lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants, and all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood." That such was the result of the descent of this *meteoric* fiery mass the Scriptures plainly assert: let those doubt them who may; we cleave to God's word; what it so unequivocally asserts we believe.

Verses 10, 11. "And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers,

* Scias.

and upon the fountains of waters; and the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter."

The falling of meteors of various sizes is so common an event, and the evidence of the existence of such bodies in space so abundant, that there need be nothing incredible in the fall of one so bitter as to embitter the waters of rivers and fountains so as to poison them and cause the death of those who drink them. The statement is a literal one, "*there fell a great star from heaven.*" Says Dr. Seias, "Interpreters tell us that a *star* denotes an eminent angel or teacher of the church. They refer us for proof of this to the first chapter of this book. But there is one important link lacking in this argument, as applied to the case before us. There Christ himself says, that 'the seven stars' beheld by the seer denote 'the angels of the seven churches;' but here he says no such thing; nor is there any proof at all that the church is in question. This star falls out of heaven, but there is no evidence whatever that the church is heaven. Besides, so great a star of the church, in such lonely distinction, could only be Christ himself, who never falls out of the church, whose name is not Wormwood, and who does not poison the fountains and rivers of earth by his teachings. When the Scriptures tell us that a thing is a symbol, we are to take it as such;

but when they give no intimation that a thing is other than literal, there is no warrant for making a symbol or figure of it."

Versé 12. "And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise."

We are aware that it has been the custom for years in the past to make those memorable words uttered by Jesus when he was upon earth, "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars" (Luke xxi. 25), mean any and every thing but just what it says—great and terrifying signs in those great luminaries which God has given to light the earth by day and by night; and we know that following out these ideas, without number have been the attempts to interpret the passage under consideration on such an hypothesis, viz., that the prediction symbolizes troubles by which the church, world, cities, Bible doctrines, and nations, are to be obscured or overthrown; others adopt other views, many of which are so unsatisfactory to their adherents, that even while advocating them they are compelled to admit their unsatisfactoriness, and general want of harmony both with Christ's teachings and the context. That there are yet to come signs in these great luminaries of heaven, viz., a darkening or obscuration of a

third part of their light, which shall terrify the wicked, those who remember various startling events in the not very distant past, as well as others recorded in history, will have no difficulty in believing, especially when the event which is here predicted finds as its corollary another passage recorded in Isaiah xiii. 9, which is equally explicit and positive in its conditions — “Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. *For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.* And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity.” Thus does scripture agree with scripture; and here we have, added to a statement already strong, another equally explicit and positive. God is governed by no consideration of impossibility in the conduct of his righteous judgments upon the wicked of the earth, but worketh according to the counsel of his own will.

THE THREE WOE TRUMPETS.

Verse 13. “And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound !”

Heard an angel. Later critics have decided "eagle" to be the true reading. But that commonly given is the more natural and easy to be understood. Those who adopt the new rendering find it difficult to interpret the action of the *eagle* in this connection. It is natural, where the entire proceeding is carried forward by angelic ministration, that an angel should be commissioned to proclaim the three coming woes on the inhabitants of earth; and so he did proclaim. A woe on men attends each of the three remaining trumpets, instead of, as before, under the former trumpets, on the earth and its productions. By them men were afflicted only incidentally; under these three the action on *men* is direct. Under the former the resources of nature were used. Under these the resources of the infernal regions are employed; infernal locusts and infernal horsemen; the former to torment men, the latter to kill them.

CHAPTER IX.

LOCUSTS FROM THE WELL PIT.

Verses 1-11. "And the sixth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke

locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle. And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power was to hurt men five months. And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon."

In this instance it is evident, from the action performed, that the "*star*" which is said to have "fallen from heaven unto the earth," is a symbol of an angelic messenger. For a star is frequently used as the symbol of an angel or messenger, whether human or superhuman, and the context must decide which, if reference is had to either. The *seven stars* in Christ's right hand are the "angels of the churches." The

dragon's tail drew a third part of "the stars of heaven," and cast them to the earth. This, no doubt, refers to the angels whom Satan seduces, and who share his fate. (See Matt. xxv. 41.) It is not natural for a star to receive, hold, or use a key.

"*Fallen from heaven unto the earth.*" The writer did not see this star angel in the act of falling, but saw him as already fallen. It may be the dragon after his defeat by Michael, and his expulsion from heaven with his angels into the earth; or it may be a subordinate angel. But whatever he is, his name is *Apollyon*, and his mission is to open the bottomless pit, and let loose its hordes of locusts; marshal and govern them in their work of tormenting men.

"*To him was given the key of the bottomless pit.*" *Πεταρος* — well, pit, cistern. *Αβυσσος* — deep, profound, bottomless, abyss, place of the dead, hell. Paul uses it in the sense of *place of the dead*. "Who shall descend into the *αβυσσος*, that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead." It was the *αβυσσος* from which the ejected demons desired Christ to spare them until their time. It is the place into which Satan is to be cast and bound for a thousand years. (Rev. xx.)

"*Key of.*" Key is the symbol of power. This angel is invested with power to open the "*well of the abyss.*" It was opened when Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, with their company, went down alive into it.

"He opened." "There arose a great smoke," so great that the sun and the air were darkened, "by reason of the smoke of the pit." That such a transaction as this will take place, there is no more reason to doubt, than there is to doubt the history of Korah and his company.

"Locusts upon the earth." Probably they arose in the smoke proceeding from the pit. That they are not natural locusts, whose nature it is to devour all green things, is evident from the fact that these do not eat any green thing; their only mission being to torment men, not to devour any vegetation.

"Seal of God." These infernal locusts are not to torment men indiscriminately. God has provided a mark for certain characters, and these are exempted from the plague, just as Israel was in Egypt, while protected by the blood of the Passover lamb from the sword of the destroying angel. Is it not to this protection our Saviour refers when he says, "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the son of man"? (Luke xxi.)

"Not kill them." Their mission was restricted. They were not to kill the subjects of their torments, nor would they be able to die, however much they desired it; "*death shall flee from them.*" A fearful picture is here presented—a torment so great as to

induce men to long for the approach of the "king of terrors;" indeed, to seek for death, but yet not able to find it; nor escape from the torment which they must bear. "Their torment is as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man." The scorpion sting produces an inflammation and redness of the parts, accompanied with the most terrible pain, inducing the subject to roll on the ground in his anguish. But it can not be escaped by death, for death itself flies away. The description of these locusts is so unearthly as to strike the stoutest heart with terror—like horses in shape, hair like women, faces like men, crowns like gold, breastplate like iron, teeth like lions, tails like scorpions, and stings in their tails, all marshaled like an army of cavalry rushing to battle, producing a sound with their wings like the chariots of many horses running to battle. "Their power was to torment men five months," or just one hundred and fifty days, under the command of king Apollyon, the destroyer, whose name is derived from the Greek verb *Ἀπολλύμι*, to destroy. And be it observed that torment is the only destruction which he has power to inflict. He is the angel of the bottomless pit. If he governs it, has he more power than with his legions of hellish locusts on earth? Who can read the description of the plagues under these trumpets, and not be reminded of our Saviour's description of the time which shall precede

his coming in a cloud? "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." In regard to the numerous theories which have been advanced from time to time as affording the *most reasonable* solution of this "*confessedly difficult passage*," we have simply to say that they do not meet the requirements of the prediction. Perhaps that which has gained for itself the largest number of adherents among the advocates of an historical interpretation of this book is, that these locusts symbolize the Mohammedan invasion of Europe and other lands, under Mohammed and his successors. It is true that in some things there are points of coincidence which have given a certain coloring of plausibility to the theory; but it can bear no searching analysis. Let us examine one or two points out of the many that exist in contravention of this theory. The prediction is very positive that these locusts, in going forth "upon the face of the earth," "should not hurt the grass nor any green thing." It is true that one of the invaders gave the command to the Saracen army invading the East, "*Destroy no palm trees nor burn any fields of corn; cut down no fruit trees.*" But this very command shows that this was an exception to the general rule; and besides, it is absurd even to

think of armies, such as went forth under Mohammedan leaders, abstaining from the injury of trees, which were necessary for fuel, and grass, necessary for the pasturage of their horses. These locusts were to have power, not to kill, but to torment. And besides all that, even this power was limited to all who had not the "*seal of God in their foreheads.*" Whereas the whole mission of these fanatical hordes which spread themselves abroad in certain parts of Europe and the East, was to kill and destroy the saints of God. When Mohammed wrote his Koran he delivered this command: "When ye encounter the unbelievers, strike off their heads, until ye have made a great slaughter among them. . . . As for the infidels, let them perish." Here, then, we have ample reason for refusing credence to a theory which is in so evident an opposition to facts. For not only were these locusts prohibited from touching those possessing the seal of God, but their power was limited to torment. They had no power to inflict death. It is true that the ground has been taken that this command, "*not to kill men,*" has been interpreted as meaning "not to annihilate them as a political Christian body." But this reasoning has met its answer in the reply of Dean Alford to one of the advocates of this theory. He says, "If, then, the same rule of interpretation is to hold, the sixth verse must mean that the 'political Christian body' will be so sorely beset by

Mehammedan locusts that it will vehemently desire to be annihilated, and not find any way. For it surely can not be allowed that *the killing of men* should be said of their annihilation as a political body in one verse, and their *desiring to die* in the next should be said of something totally different, and applicable to their individual misery."

But it is said that these Mehammedans in their mighty array, in the bustling, confusing sound made by them upon the march, the character of their dress and accouterments of war, their long hair, their horses, their turbans, breastplates, and shields, all rendered the resemblance between them and these *so-called* "symbolical locusts" so complete that it is impossible to mistake the allusion. "But how could turbans be like geld?" Or even admitting this general resemblance, when the character of their work differs so essentially from that spoken of in the prophecy, why should a few petty details, in which there may *appear* something of a coincidence, be taken as affording conclusive reasons for the adoption of an interpretation so strained as this?

THE SECOND WOE—THE SIXTH TRUMPET.

Verses 12-21. "One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter. And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the

four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men. And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them. And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their month, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts."

None who read and believe the description of the work of the locusts in tormenting men, will doubt but what it will be a "woe" on the inhabitants of the earth. But it will be past ere the second woe is introduced; clearly, then, they are consecutive.

"Loose the four angels which are bound in," or by, as an instrument, bond, or limit, "the great river Euphrates." That four angels or messengers of wrath are restrained by the literal *River Euphrates*,

the eastern boundary of the Roman empire, awaiting the time appointed for their action within its bounds, there is no reason for doubting. They are those bound by angelic order, as recorded in chapter vii. 3. The command to loose them is said to come "from one of the four horns of the golden altar which is before God," and on which were offered the prayers of all the saints with much incense. This action denotes the nature of those prayers, by the answer that is given in letting loose the judgments of God already prepared, but awaiting the proper moment to be introduced. "*And the four angels were loosed.*" The exact hour for them to be loosed was fixed. They were prepared *unto* an hour, day, month, and year. That is, the exact time for their loosing was fixed, to a year, a month, a day, and an hour; it is not an exact period during which they should act. "To slay the third part of men." To what extent is not stated, whether on the whole globe, or the Roman empire—the dominion of the beast, or the land of Israel. But to whatever extent their commission runs, one third part of men are to be killed by this woe. The agents of destruction under these four angels were to be horsemen, and the horses they ride.

This army is announced to be two hundred millions in number—an army equal to all the men on earth able to bear arms. John heard the number stated; he did not count them himself. Not only did he hear

the number, but saw the horses, and those who sat on them, and he proceeds to describe them as he saw them. Their riders had breastplates of fire, and jacinth, and brimstone. Jacinth is the color of the blue flame of brimstone. The heads of the horses were as the heads of lions, and out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone. Their power lay in their mouths and tails. By the fire, smoke, and brimstone suffocating those they approached, the third part of men was killed.


"Their tails were like serpents, having heads," and with those heads attached to the serpent-like tail, they do hurt. It is not said that any are killed by the tails, but they are hurt by them, and killed by what proceeds from their mouths.

These beings, like the horses and chariots of fire which filled the mountains in the days of Elisha, must be supernatural beings, of which heaven and hell are full. The two witnesses of Rev. ii. are said to do much the same thing; but then they are endowed by God for their work.

One would suppose that such judgments would lead men to repent of their sins and seek mercy. But as it was in Egypt in the days of Pharaoh, so will it be in this instance; instead of being convinced, and softening their hearts, they are rather rendered hard and more obdurate than before; and so continue to worship demons and idols, to commit murders, fornication,

tions, and thefts. Such is human nature when left to itself. Mercies and judgments alike fail to move men without the influence of the Holy Ghost. All the plagues of these six trumpets are unavailing to produce repentance. Nothing remains, then, but for the final or third woo, which is to bring the judgment of the dead, and "destroy them that destroy the earth." (See chapter xi. 15-19.)

These agents, it should be remembered, were shown John in his vision in heaven. Whether, in the days of the fulfillment, these agencies will be any more visible or tangible to the natural senses than were the horses and chariots of fire which Gehazi's eyes were opened to see in the days of Elisha, admits of doubt. But that such instrumentalities are in reserve for that dreadful day, admits of no doubt. How the prophet Elisha was defended by the fiery horses, we do not know; how his enemies were smitten with blindness by their agency, we can not comprehend; but yet the fact remains — they were the prophet's defense; and the blindness came, and his enemies were made an easy prey. So we may be left in doubt and uncertainty about many things in regard to the demon cavalry; but the wicked will one day feel their power, while the saints will have protection.



CHAPTER X.

PREFACE TO THE SEVENTH TRUMPET.

Verses 1-7. "And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow *was* upon his head, and his face *was* as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire: and he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and *his left foot* on the earth, and cried with a loud voice, as *when* a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not. And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: but in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets."

The effect of the second woe in the continued impotence of the survivors of that judgment having been shown, it only remains now to prepare for the third and final woe of the series. Accordingly an angel of mighty power and majestic mien, clothed with a cloud, girt with a rainbow on his head, and his face like the

sun, descends from heaven to prepare the way. With an open book in his hand, he set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the earth, and gave a cry like the roar of a lion, which was followed by the voice of seven thunders. What they said was commanded to be left unwritten, and sealed up. But the action and oath of the angel who came from heaven with the little open book, attracted the prophet's attention. Lifting his hand to heaven, he swore by him who liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, earth, and sea, and all that is in them, "that the time shall not be yet" for the mystery to end. But when the seventh angel begins to sound, the mystery of God in taking out of the Gentiles a people for his name, shall be finished and the judgment be completed. After the seventh trumpet begins to sound, there will be no more place for repentance. He that is filthy will be filthy still, and he that is holy will be holy still. This declaration of the angel is especially notable, as affording a clew to the correct interpretation of scenes especially relating the ushering in of the millennial and eternal ages. For, following in consecutive order, as will be seen, comes the time of judgment and reward, which, in its turn, precedes the scenes recorded in the twentieth of Revelation: so that we would invite the especial attention and study of the reader and student to this important link in the chain of coming events.

THE LITTLE BOOK EATEN.

Verses 8-11. "And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go *and* take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth. And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take *it*, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings."

The import of this transaction seems to be, that he was to be thus endowed with further knowledge of coming events, which at first, on the reception, would be sweet to his taste; for knowledge is sweet. But in digesting it, and coming to a full comprehension of its import, it would fill him with bitterness. For the message thus received would constrain him again to "prophesy concerning many people, nations, tongues, and kings." The duty of proclaiming messages of peace to men is always pleasant and grateful to the messenger; but when the scene changes, and the servant of the Lord is charged with the announcement of judgments, it is painful to his feelings. But still it is as needful that he should discharge that duty as the more pleasing one. If he will clear his own soul,

he must speak, whether men will hear or forbear. The substance of the little book is probably revealed in the succeeding chapter. It may be that John is yet to perform service as one of the two witnesses, and thus fulfill his mission of prophesying again. It has been suggested by many that John probably has never yet died, as Christ intimated that he might live to his coming. And indeed there is no evidence of his death other than a tradition somewhat similar to that which has given the world the impression that Peter died at Rome—a tradition which has never been able to stand the test of any critical research. And our Lord certainly gave occasion for believing that John would not die, sufficiently strong to lead the disciples to believe he would not. (John xxi. 23.)

CHAPTER XI.

THE TWO WITNESSES.

Verses 1, 2. "And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months."

That there are to be great events yet to transpire in the Holy Land and in Jerusalem, is clearly stated

in the eleventh chapter of Daniel. "The king of the North" is to invade and take that land "at the time of the end," and "plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain." (Daniel xi. 40-45.) The sanctuary and host also are to be cast down, and the daily sacrifice be taken away by the same power. Of course this necessarily implies that the sanctuary or temple is to be re-established in Jerusalem, and the sacrifices appointed by the law be offered, or it can not be taken away.

The scene, then, of this chapter is laid in Jerusalem and her temple.

"Rise, and measure the temple," "the altar," and *the worshipers*. What is intended by this measuring is not apparent. The interest now manifested in the civilized world concerning Jerusalem, and her recovery from the ruin of ages, indicates a revival of something like her ancient glory. Her ancient inhabitants, the Jewish people, will be the worshipers in the holy court at the altar. In the outer court the Gentiles will approach; therefore it is not to be measured. For forty-two months the Gentiles are to tread it under foot. That is the time of the little horn's reign, or that of the wild beast of the Apocalypse. And during those forty-two months' reign of the wild beast in Jerusalem, the temple, altar, and worshipers will be inviolable by the Gentiles.

Verses 3-6. "And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive-trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will."

During those forty-two months, or twelve hundred and sixty days, Christ will endow his two witnesses with power to stand against all opposing influences, and give testimony for him. All that is said of these witnesses indicates that they are two men who will act the part here assigned them. "These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." "The reference is to Zech. iv. 3, 12, where two individuals are meant, Joshua and Zerubbabel, who ministered to the Jewish church just as the two olive trees emptied the oil out of themselves into the bowl of the candlestick. So in the final apostasy, God will raise up two inspired witnesses to minister encouragement" * to his faithful people, while at the same time they breathe out denunciations against a guilty and rebellious world. Some suppose them to be Enoch and Elijah, because

* Faussett.

those two men never died; they are evergreens. Others contend that they will be Moses and Elijah, because the miracles and plagues correspond with those which they inflicted. But all this is conjecture and speculation. Time alone will determine those points. These men, during the period of their work, will be invulnerable to all assaults. "If any man will hurt them, fire," a blast of fire, "proceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies." So also, like Elijah, they have power to shut heaven so that during the days of their prophesying it will not rain on the earth. They also have power to do as Moses did in Egypt—turn water into blood; and in addition to that, "to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will." By divine protection, they shall be safe from danger of death until their work is done.

Verses 7-11. "And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. And after three days and a half the spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them."

"*When they shall have finished.*" Those who take the historical view of this passage render it "when they shall be about to finish their testimony." But this is incongruous. Their testimony is to be twelve hundred and sixty days. Either they will finish it or they will not. They are invulnerable till then. They can not finish it after they are killed; they must do it before death, for they ascend to heaven as soon as they rise. We have the true reading — "*Shall have finished.*"

"*The beast.*" Here is a reference to one already in existence to whom no reference has as yet been made, a personage not described until afterward, and thus the panoramic nature of the book is again illustrated. Their manifested invulnerability will have so alarmed him that he will not dare trust a civil posse to take them; and therefore he levies war against them, and with an army overcomes and kills them. "Arms shall stand on his part," &c. (Dan. xi. 31.)

"*Their dead bodies.*" These are left in the street, a spectacle to the infuriated mob, subjected to all manner of indignities. Thus the whole phraseology of the prediction indicates that two *individuals* are meant; not a church, or churches, or the books of the Old or New Testament, or anything else than just what is indicated by the text.

"Great city which is spiritually," or by the Spirit, "called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was

crucified." This passage has long been an obstacle in the way of those who adopt the historical view of the Apocalypse, the consciousness of which is shown by the numerous and strained efforts made to make the words mean anything and everything but just that which they indicate on their face. The great city, say they, which is called Sodom and Egypt, where our Lord was crucified, is the empire of Rome. The street where the dead bodies of the witnesses lay for three days and a half, is that part of the Roman nation where (as the interpreter may hold) those churches or the Bible, were destroyed or prohibited. Of course there are other views, which need not be mentioned at present; but with all there is this one great objection: they give to a plain declaration of God's word an interpretation not warranted by the prophecy. Jerusalem has been termed Sodom by the Spirit. Thus, in Isa i. 10, "Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom," was said to Jerusalem on the occasion of her apostasy from God, and going after strange gods, disregarding the covenant which had been made between them and Jehovah. But the succeeding clause settles the whole matter, "where also our Lord was crucified." It may be objected that our Lord was not crucified in the city, but outside its walls; but this is a quibble upon words hardly worthy attention, as with perfect propriety an event may be said to have occurred at a specified place, even when it may have oc-

curred a few hundred feet or a few rods without the boundary proper. "It can not be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem," Christ said of himself; but he did die outside the walls, on Calvary. As it was on the day of Pentecost, so it will be in this time; representatives out of every nation under heaven were dwelling at Jerusalem, and heard of the wonderful works of God. So they will see the dead bodies of these men lie there, and will not suffer them to be buried. The news will be flashed over the wires to the uttermost parts of the earth that the prophets are dead. This will cause universal rejoicing, because of the plagues which they inflicted during their ministry. Characters so pure would naturally be hated by a scorning world; but when, in addition to the unwelcome truths they so fearlessly proclaim, they inflict plagues and torments upon the opposers and haters of God, that hatred would naturally be augmented to an intensity only to be satisfied by the ignominious death of the objects of their hate. So, when the news comes that they are dead, there will undoubtedly come a burst of rejoicing over the prospect of their deliverance. But their joy will be short-lived; only three days and a half, and their terror will be as extreme as their joy had been excessive. For, to the surprise of their enemies, they will be seen suddenly to rise to their feet alive, the spirit of life from God having entered into them.

Verses 12, 13. "And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven."

The terror caused by their resurrection will be enhanced by the strange events which are to follow. A voice will call from heaven, saying, "Come up hither." And forthwith, in the presence of the assembled multitude, they will, like their Lord from the Mount of Olives, ascend to heaven in a cloud, while their enemies behold them. But this is not all; wonders and alarms thicken. The same hour of the ascension there will be a great earthquake, by which *one tenth part* of Jerusalem will fall and seven thousand men be slain. The survivors will be affrighted, and give glory to the God of heaven, and acknowledge it to be his work. But that it will lead them to repentance and saving faith is not intimated.

The twelve hundred and sixty days of these two witnesses will probably cover the time of the daily sacrifice. But when they are removed "the abomination of desolation" will be set up in the temple, and the "man of sin" demand universal worship for twelve hundred and ninety days. Thus it will be seen that the period of their prophesying will be at a

time when the Jewish nation will be engaged in a work commenced at the instigation of Antichrist, which is contrary to the order of God's will, as under the new dispensation; we have reference to the sacrificial worship in the reconstructed temple. And thus the propriety of these two witnesses, constantly uplifting their voices in the midst of the prevailing sin of the nations, giving utterance to the will of Jehovah. And why may it not be that these two witnesses shall be representatives, — one of the Jewish, and the other of the Christian church, — uniting their testimonies in favor of God and his revealed word, rebuking the connection of the Jews with Antichrist, and revealing the way of God more perfectly? All this will take place during the sounding of the trumpets, and those plagues be inflicted by the will of the two witnesses. For under the trumpets the waters are turned to blood, and under the trumpets the dominion of the beast, which we have already seen is in existence at this period, extends. This ends the second woe and the sixth trumpet.

THE SEVENTH TRUMPET AND THIRD WOE.

Verses 14-19. "The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly. And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty

elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshiped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail."

We have seen that about the time the second woe ends, the angel from God comes down to prepare the way for the sounding of the seventh angel. We thus find that the third woe or seventh trumpet does not immediately commence when the second woe ends, but, as declared in verse 14, will come "*quickly*."

John still held his station in heaven, and at the blast of the seventh angel "loud voices were heard in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of the *κοσμος*;" — *globe, whole earth* — "are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever." Here it will be seen that whatever *may* be the *nature* of Christ's reign, its locality is the *kosmos*, its duration is eternal, and it is to be introduced by the sounding of the seventh trumpet.

This part of the passage is very frequently quoted

by those who advocate the idea of the post-millennial advent of Christ, as affording a very strong confirmation of their views; but we can see no ground whatever for such an assumption, for the tenor of the whole passage bears directly against it. In the first place the sounding of the seventh trumpet is to introduce a woe upon the inhabitants of a wicked world, while God's saints are to be rewarded for their long-suffering. Now, can we suppose that any such glorious and blessed event as the universal conversion of the world, the wicked world, to Christ can even by a *figure of speech*, strain it as we may, be termed a woe? Would it not rather be a blessing such as the world has never yet received?

But it may, perhaps, be urged that this is the signal for such an outpouring of divine judgments upon the nations as shall convince them of their sins, and bring them repentantly to the feet of the Son of God, that he may have mercy upon them and abundantly pardon all their transgressions. But the passage will not admit of even such an interpretation. In the scenes preparatory to the sounding of this trumpet, the angel who stood with one foot on the sea and another on the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven and swore by the great God, the Creator of all things, that, "In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished, as he hath declared

to his servants the prophets." These words give an intimation of the character of the coming scenes, which the passage under consideration more fully unfolds. After declaring that the "kingdoms of this *kosmos* or *world* are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever," the four and twenty elders "fell upon their faces before God," and returned thanks that he had taken his great power, and reigned, and said, "And the nations were angry, and thy *wrath* is come, and the *time of the dead that they should be judged*, and that thou shouldest give *reward* unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great, and shouldest destroy them that destroy the earth."

Here the character or nature of the scene is revealed. The angel declared, "delay should be no longer." The four and twenty elders proclaimed, "the time of the dead that they should be judged" had come. The angel declared that when the trumpet should "begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished." The four and twenty elders declare that the time had come when God "should give reward unto his servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear his name, small and great." This is the time when those souls under the altar, whose mournful plaint had come up into the ears of the Lord God of Sabaoth, saying, "How long, O Lord,

holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" and to whom it was replied, "that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." This is the time when they should be avenged, for "the four and twenty elders declare that the time of God's wrath is come;" . . . that he "should destroy them that destroy the earth." With these facts fixed in our minds, it requires no straining or forcing of language to make the passage fit a preconceived theory. But all is rendered simple and plain. But let us ask, *When* are the dead to be judged? and *when* are God's saints to be rewarded? Evidently at Christ's second advent, for it is declared he "shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing." (2 Tim. iv. 1.) And again (1 Cor. xv. 51, 52), "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, *at the last trump*: for the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Now, if it be objected that this trumpet is not the one referred to in Revelation, we reply, that the word *last* implies a series, and we can find no other series than these seven, the last of which brings us to an event which certainly is very similar to that spoken of in 1 Cor. xv.

Taking all these facts, then, into consideration, there is no evidence whatever that these kingdoms become

Christ's by submission, but rather that the words of the second Psalm are fulfilled — "Ask of me, and I shall give the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."

CHAPTER XII.

THE WOMAN, MAN CHILD, AND DRAGON.

Verses 1-6. "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: and she, being with child, cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days."

"*A great sign in heaven.*" A sign is not the real thing, but a symbol of a reality. This woman, then, is, instead of a real woman, a symbol of something

else. In Daniel's vision of the eighth chapter, he saw a ram and a goat; they were *signs* or *symbols* of something else, which he did not see. What they symbolized, the angel thus informed the prophet: "The ram which thou sawest, having two horns, are the kings of Media and Persia. The rough goat is the king of Grecia." The ram and goat were the signs or symbols, and the kings of Media and Persia were the things symbolized. The conflict of the two beasts, one with the other, symbolized just as actual a conflict between the respective powers which they represented.

Here the sign is a woman in a pregnant condition, resulting in the birth of a man child. Who or what does the woman signify? for it is evident that she symbolizes something else, otherwise she would not have been called a *sign*. The prevailing interpretation is, that she signifies the church, some holding the child, of which she was delivered, to be *Christ*, others that he was *Constantine* the Great. The objections to either of these theories are, first, that what was to be shown to John in heaven was "things which must be hereafter." Christ's birth preceded the vision by a hundred years. Secondly, the church is the product of Christ, and not Christ of the church. Thirdly, the attempt to apply it to Constantine is grossly absurd, and introduces the utmost confusion.

Is there any more consistent interpretation? Let

us inquire, What does a woman symbolize in Scripture? In Rev. xvii. 18, a woman is used to symbolize "that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth."

If in that case a woman symbolizes a city, why not here? Paul's allegory (Gal. iv.) will perhaps shed light on the subject. Sarah and Hagar, he says, are an allegory; they are, or represent, the two covenants — Hagar, the old covenant from Mount Sinai, which brings forth children to bondage. This answers to old "Jerusalem which is in bondage" to the law, "with her children." Hence our Savior recognized her as the mother of the Jewish race. (Matt. xxiii. 37.) Sarah represents "the Jerusalem which is above, and is free, and is the mother" of all saints. In order to reach their home and mother, they must be born into immortality.

Isa. lvi. 7-9 will shed still further light on the subject. It is Zion and her children of whom the prophet is speaking. He says of her, that "before her pain came she was delivered," not, as in our translation, "of a man child," but literally "of a male," implying full strength and maturity, contrary to all example in nature. He asks, in reference to this wonder, "Who hath heard such a thing? Who hath seen such things?" The implied answer is, No one.

Next he asks, in reference to the birth of all Zion's children, "Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once?" Again

the implied answer is, No. The productions of the earth are brought forth gradually, by slow progress. A nation is born one by one. But, contrary to nature, "as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children" into immortality in one moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

As Isa. lvi. 7 represents Zion as bringing forth a *Zachar, a male*, one of full strength, which can only be to immortality, so this woman of the Apocalypse brings forth *τιον αρρενα* — a *son*, a male, not a child, but one of full strength.

According to these collateral passages, the new covenant, Christianity, which produces children of the New Jerusalem, is the woman of this chapter. She is clothed with the sun, the glorious gospel light; she stands on the law and the prophets, the lesser light; her crown of glory is her twelve apostles. Her child is A MALE SON — a strange form of expression, if it were not intended to convey the idea of maturity and full strength at birth, for *son* implies a *male* of itself. If it were not for the fact that these revelations were of things to come to pass after the days of John, we might understand it as referring to the resurrection of Christ, and his ascension into heaven to the throne of God. But this fact stands in the way. Another difficulty is, the immediate flight of the woman after the rapture of her son. There are two arguments in favor of understanding the scene as having reference

to Christ. First, he was the first born to immortality, and caught up to God's throne. Secondly, he is to "rule all nations with a rod of iron." (Pa. ii. 9.) So that the argument seems to be evenly balanced for and against its being Christ.

There is another view, which has at least some plausibility, and which we are inclined to adopt. In chapter xiv. 1-5, we are introduced to one hundred and forty-four thousand standing on *Mount Zion*, with the Lamb, before the throne of God. These are "redeemed from among men," and "from the earth," "being the first fruits unto God and the Lamb." These are Christ's retinue, or body-guard, "for they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." Are they not the overcomers who have the promise of ruling and breaking the nations with a rod of iron? Does not the bringing forth of a *male son* imply such translation before the general translation? The change to immortality takes place; Satan, aware of it, stands ready to devour this heavenly offspring immediately after his birth. But he is delivered by being caught away to God and his throne.

THE DRAGON.

The great red dragon is another sign in heaven. What he symbolizes we are told in verse 9. He is "that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, and which deceiveth the whole world." Why the idea

ever obtained credence that he represents the Roman empire is passing strange in the light of this divine interpretation of the symbol.

But it is asked, What do his seven heads and ten horns represent, if he is the devil? We reply, What do the seven horns and seven eyes of the Lamb represent in chapter v. 6, "which are the seven spirits of God"? They are Christ's hierarchy. So, also, the devil has his dignitaries, thrones, dominions, and principalities in the heavens, and these heads and horns represent them.

The third part of the stars of heaven, who were drawn by the dragon's tail, are angels seduced from their allegiance by his subtlety.

The dragon stood before the woman, the symbol of Christianity, or new covenant, to devour her child as soon as it was born, or changed to immortality. "And her child was caught AWAY unto God and to his throne." As soon as the child was taken to heaven, the woman fled into the wilderness." Where the wilderness is may not be manifest to us; but it is "a place prepared of God" as a refuge for her. There, for twelve hundred and sixty days, she is to be fed and sustained. It may be Moab. (See Isa. xvi. 3-5.) It may be that God has raised up Prussia to her present strength as a refuge. But a place he will have when the time comes.

Verses 7-12. "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."

As far back as the days of Job we have information of the appearance of Satan in the council-chamber of heaven, to accuse God's servants. Job was accused of hypocrisy, serving God for the good things he enjoyed. And it would seem from this passage that Satan has continued to act the part of an accuser until now. But his attempt to seize and devour by violence an immortal saint brings on a crisis even in heaven; and MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL rouses his squadrons to arms, and gives battle to the dragon and his hosts, when he and his angels are discomfited, and driven forever from the heavenly courts into the earth.

While the accuser has had access to the throne, the saints have had an advocate there, and through his blood and the word of their testimony they have overcome all his accusations. "They loved not their lives even unto the death." Sooner than relinquish their testimony for Christ they have been willing to lay down their lives, not counting that as a service of merit, but trusting to the blood of Christ for salvation.

No sooner was the devil driven from the heavenly courts than great voices were heard in heaven, saying, "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down." Thus Christ's victories begin in heaven, and the kingdom of God is first established there. Thus our Lord taught. "The kingdom of heaven is like a nobleman who went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return." "And when he was returned, having received the kingdom." Clearly he will receive his kingdom ere he returns.

Then heaven and its inhabitants are called on to rejoice, because Satan is cast down. And for the same reason the inhabitants of the earth and sea are warned of coming woe, because the devil is come to earth in great wrath, for he knoweth that he has but a short time before he will be confined in the bottomless pit, and his career of deception and wickedness be ended for a thousand years.

Verses 13-17. "And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

It is when the dragon finds himself hurled from the battlements of heaven into the earth that his wrath is turned against the woman, and he determines to utterly destroy her from the face of the earth. To her are then "given two wings of a great eagle," implying strength of motion and swiftness of flight, to escape the devil's power, and reach the place prepared for her of God, where she is to be nourished for a time, times, and a half, or twelve hundred and sixty literal days, from the face of the serpent.

Some argue that the two wings of a great eagle indicate the United States as the place of refuge for Christianity in that time of peril, because the eagle is our symbol. As to its correctness we have nothing to say.

The time of flight seems to be that specified by Christ (Matt. xxiv. 15-20), when the "abomination of desolation" shall be seen in the holy place. It is from Judea they are to flee. That country is usually designated as the $\gamma\eta$, *gee*, land. It was into it the devil was cast when hurled from heaven. As she flees, the dragon pursues her with a flood cast forth from his mouth, to carry her away. But it is all in vain. The $\gamma\eta$ (*land*) helped the woman by opening her mouth, and swallowing the flood cast from the dragon's mouth. Waters symbolize *people* and *multitudes*, &c. (See ch. xvii. 15.) Earth may open her mouth again, as she did in the days of Moses, to swallow up his enemies; and they who pursue the woman go down alive into the pit, as did Korah and his company. But in whatever way, the woman will be protected from the devil's power.

But a remnant of the woman's seed remain, who do not flee, and to them the serpent turns his attention, and goes to make war on them. They seem to be *Christian Jews*, keeping the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ, like the early Christian Jews. In order to successfully prosecute his war on the remnant of the woman's seed, he arranges with the beast of chapter xiii. a plan by which that monster shall have what Satan proposed to give to Jesus as the price of his worship, and finds a ready listener and tool, to whom he assigns a *throne, power, and great authority*.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE RESURRECTED BEAST LIKE A LEOPARD.

Verses 1-4. "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the month of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshiped the dragon, which gave power unto the beast: and they worshiped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?"

Some manuscripts render the first clause of the first verse of this chapter in the third person: "*He* stood," that is, the dragon, "on the sand of the sea; and I saw a beast rise up out of the sea." The idea is this: The devil, cast from heaven to earth, and determined to make war on the remnant of the woman's seed, perches himself on the shores of *the sea* (the Mediterranean), and casts about him to see what instrument he can find suited to his purpose. While thus watching, a beast from the bottomless pit is seen emerging from the sea, and he resolves to make him his confederate, and so approaches him. The description and

appendages of this beast are very singular. First, he is like a leopard, the same as Daniel's third beast. (See Dan. vii.) Secondly, he has seven heads,—just as many as all Daniel's four beasts,—for the first, the one like a lion, had one head; the second, the same; the third, the one like a leopard, had four heads; and the nondescript had one head; seven in all. Thirdly, he had ten horns, the same number of Daniel's fourth beast. This beast like a leopard had previously existed, but had been killed by a deadly wound given to one of his heads; but, as he now appears again, the deadly wound is healed, and his reappearance fills the world with wonder. The bear's feet, the lion's mouth, the fourth beast's horns, were all his. All these appendages indicate that he, in his resurrected state, is to be the head of all the former dominions of the four beasts, and rule them all. "His power shall be mighty," said Gabriel (Dan. viii. 24); "but not by his own power;" for "his power, throne, and great authority" are derived from the dragon, who gives them to him as the price of his worship, just as he promised them to Christ at the same price. Christ rejected, and the beast accepts the offer. Not the beast alone worships the dragon who gave power to him, but his subjects also, for *they* worshiped the dragon; also they worshiped the beast as well as the dragon, saying, "Who is like the beast? who is able to make war with him?" With the power of the

dragon to second him, he and his subjects feel themselves confident of their prowess and ability to cope with the whole world. Armed with this power, as we learn from Dan. viii. 25, "He shall magnify himself in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand."

The almost universal theory that this beast is the Roman government, its seven heads the seven different forms of that government, the ten horns the barbarian kingdoms, and its forty-two months of power to make war on the saints twelve hundred and sixty years of papal rule, is irreconcilable with the fact of its being *like a leopard restored to life*. The beast representative of the Roman power was unlike all others—a nondescript; whereas "the beast like a leopard" was undeniably the symbol of the Grecian dominion. That the Grecian kingdom of Syria is destined to be the ruling power of the earth in the last days, or, "at the time of the end," is clearly taught in Daniel, eighth and eleventh chapters. The ten kings of the Roman dominion are to give their power, strength, and kingdom to the beast, as we are told in Rev. xvii. That the little horn of the goat (Dan. viii.) is to "*wax exceeding great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the pleasant land,*" we are also informed; so that he will hold Palestine, Egypt, Chaldea, Média, and Persia, and rule over

them ; in short, hold the dominion of the four beasts of Daniel. Thus the great image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Dan. ii.) will be so reconstructed under his power that when the stone shall smite the image on his feet, "the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold will all be broken to pieces together, and become like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor." Thus this "beast like a leopard" is not a new or *fifth* universal monarchy, as some argue that it would constitute, but a combination of the elements of the four under "one of the heads" of the leopard, who is restored to life by the healing of the deadly wound of one of the heads, which is the Syrian head, called in Dan. xi. "the king of the north." He is identical with the little horn of the goat, which came out of one of the four horns, and is therefore the Antichrist, for that horn is to stand up against the Prince of princes.

Verses 5-8. "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

In this passage we identify the beast with the little horn of Dan. vii. He has the mouth of that horn; he speaks the words of that horn; he has the blasphemy of that horn; he has the war-making power against the saints of that horn; he has the times of that horn — forty and two months, three and a half years. Hence that *horn* is not, as has often been contended, the symbol of the papacy, but of the Grecian beast restored to life. The characteristic of this beast will be seen to be identical with the man of sin (2 Thess. ii.), and the willful king of Dan. xi. 36-39, who is the "king of the north." This introduces a radical change in Apocalyptical interpretation.

Power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. This is the same grant of universal power given to Nebuchadnezzar in Jer. xxvii. and Dan. ii.: "Wherever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field, or the fowls of heaven, he hath given into thy hand, and made thee ruler over them all." Whether this power embraces more territory than the four kingdoms time alone will determine.

The extent of worship is another point. "All that dwell on the *γῆς*" (*earth, land*) "shall worship him." This word is more frequently used to designate Palestine than otherwise; whether it is here to be restricted to that locality it will be difficult to determine. One consideration seems rather to give it that restriction. It is Christ's instruction, in Matt. xxiv. 15, 16,

"When, therefore, ye shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet stand in the holy place," &c., "then let them which be in *Judea* flee to the mountains." This seems to intimate that escape from that land will be escape from the claims of the beast and his image. That *its influence* will be restricted to that country is no ways likely; it will be world-wide in its extent, but more terrible in Palestine.

There is but one safeguard against being overcome by the demands of this beast for worship; that is, to have our names "written in the Lamb's book of life," which means, to be the true children of God.

"Slain from the foundation of the world." In the purpose of God, Christ was slain, offered a sacrifice for sin, "from the foundation of the world," ever since sin entered the world, "but made manifest in these last times for you who by him do believe in God, which gave him glory, and raised him from the dead." To have refuge in Christ by faith, then, should be with us the all-absorbing interest, for thus we shall be safe whatever ills may come.

Verses 9, 10. "If any man have an ear, let him hear. He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints."

This address to those who have an ear is of univer-

sal application, and is of vast importance. The tenth verse is rendered much more clearly by the *American Bible Union* than in the common English version. "If any one is for captivity, he goes into captivity; if any to be killed by the sword, he must be killed with the sword." This is further illustrated by Jer. xv. 1, 2. "Cast them forth out of my sight, and let them go forth. And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then shalt thou tell them, such as are for death to death; and such as are for the sword to the sword; and such as are for the famine to the famine; and such as are for the captivity to the captivity." Whatever is their doom, it will come upon them. It is the award of the judgment of God, for it "must begin at the house of God." And "here is the [trial of] the patience and faith of the saints" under the reign of the beast, and his forty-two months' war.

ANOTHER BEAST.

Verses 11-17. "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and decoiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in

the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name."

This beast, or government, comes up after the seven-headed leopard beast springs from the bottomless pit through the sea, and is the accomplice of his predecessor. His whole business seems to be to bring the world under the power and dominion of the first beast. Who he is, or what the peculiar form of his government will be, is not clearly manifest beyond this: He "had two horns," implying two branches, in some shape, to his dominion. The horns are lamb-like; but that is his only lamb-like quality, for he is to "speak like a dragon." Evidently he is also the false prophet, so frequently spoken of in subsequent parts of the book, for he, like that personage, performs miracles in the presence of the beast to deceive mankind, and induce the worship of the beast. The old theory that the first beast is the Roman Papacy, and the false prophet Mohammedanism, is entirely untenable, for Mohammedanism never played into the hands of the

pope. On the contrary, the papacy and Mohammedans have always been the most determined opponents. This beast, the false prophet, does play into the hands of the first beast, saying that they should worship the first beast, who had the deadly wound by the sword, and whose deadly wound was healed.

This beast exercises in his very presence all the power of the first beast. "He causes the *land* and all who dwell therein to worship the first beast."

He is a miracle-worker; so that "he doeth great signs," as Jesus said the false prophets and false Christs, who should exist in the days of tribulation, would do, so as to "deceive, if possible, the very elect." He, like the prophet Elijah in his day, will cause fire to come from heaven in the sight of men, and thus, with signs and wonders, deceive and lead them astray. He, too, is to command an image to be made, the same as did Nebuchadnezzar, as an object of worship. The image is to be that of the beast, and for his benefit. So we are told (Dan. xi. 38, 39) the king of the north will do—acknowledge a strange god, and increase him with glory, while he himself claims to be God, and an object of worship.

This two-horned beast not only commands the image of the beast to be made, but he has power to give a living, intelligent *spirit* to the image, that it should speak. Faber's imago, which has for the last score of years astonished the world by his loquacious

powers, is moved to speak by outside force and intelligence. But take the same image, or one more perfect and automatic, and invest it with a spirit, intelligent and self-acting, like *planchette*, and self-speaking, and let such an image command that all who will not worship him shall be killed, and we should be in the midst of terrors.

But all this the image is to do, and more also. For he is to ordain and cause that all, small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, "shall receive a mark in their right hand or in their forehead," so that, when any one goes to market and is challenged to produce his mark, he must do it, or he can "neither buy nor sell." This mark seems to be a brand containing the name of the beast; and its reception will be an act of allegiance to him. It will be the beast's name, the beast's mark, and the number of the beast's name, all in one.

Verse 18. "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six."

Each letter of the Greek alphabet is a numeral. The number of a man's name is the numerical power of the letters composing his name, summed up. The beast will be a Greek power; so, in all likelihood, his mark will be his name in Greek, and be imposed on

all his subjects. The numerical power of the letters composing his name will be six hundred threescore and six. Let him who has sufficient wisdom count his number.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-FOUR THOUSAND OF FIRST FRUITS.


Verses 1-5. "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him a hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps. And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God."

The subject of these verses constitutes a scene by itself. The scene is laid in heaven, for the new song is sung before the throne; and the singers are redeemed from the earth. Hence the Lamb and his retinue are on the mount Sion, in heaven—not on

earth. They are the same hundred and forty-four thousand who were sealed in their foreheads with the seal of the living God, as described in chapter seven; then they were to be exposed to dangers and temptations, and the seal afforded them protection. Now they are redeemed from earth, and from among men, by being translated to heaven, and united to Christ, their head; the name of their Father still being written in their foreheads.

The sound of the voice out of heaven, and the sound of harpers harping with their harps, is the voice, harp, and song of the hundred and forty-four thousand; and it is a song peculiar to themselves, which they alone are able to learn. These only, at this point are shown to the seer as "redeemed from the earth." That they do not constitute the body of the saints of earth, is determined by the fact, that they are *first fruits*, which implies a *subsequent harvest*. And furthermore, that subsequent harvest is introduced to us in verses 14-16, when the "Son of Man" comes on the white cloud to reap that harvest.

Why these are permitted such honor is because of their virgin purity of character. These follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. They are his body-guard and retinue, and will be such when he descends from heaven for the conquest of the earth in the battle of that great day of God Almighty. In their mouth was found no falsehood; for they are blameless. Such is the history of this strange company.



The law ordained two offerings of first fruits of the earth, and they are to be regarded as types of things to come.

1. "On the morrow after the Sabbath," in the time of the passover, a sheaf of first fruits of the harvest was to be gathered and presented to the priest to wave before the Lord, for a wave-offering. And they were not permitted to eat even green ears of corn until this was done. (Lev. xxiii. 9-12.)

This type was fulfilled at the time of Christ's resurrection, which took place "on the morrow after the Sabbath," when "many bodies of the saints which slept arose and came out of their graves after his resurrection." (Matt. xxvii. 50-53.) Thus he was "the first born among many brethren."

2. But fifty days after this offering, on the day of pentecost, a new meat-offering, of first fruits, in the form of a wave loaf, was to be brought and waved for a wave-offering before the Lord. (Lev. xxiii. 15-20.)

As the first offering of first fruits had its antitype in the resurrection of a goodly company of saints, why may not the latter have its accomplishment by a translation of one hundred and forty-four thousand living saints to heaven before the general harvest?

THE THREE ANGELS AND THEIR MESSAGE.

Verses 6, 7. "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to

preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

A new scene here opens, consisting of six parts: the first angel, who proclaims, *the judgment come*; the second angel, who proclaims, *Babylon fallen*; the third angel, who warns against *the beast, his image, worship, mark, and name, and tells the consequence of yielding to his claims* — the voice from heaven, with the Spirit's testimony as to the blessedness of the dead who die in the Lord from that time; the Son of Man on the white cloud to reap earth's harvest; another angel to gather the clusters of the vine of earth and tread the wine-press. Such are the six parts of this vision.

The angel flying mid-heaven is not, as many believe, the symbol of the universal message of *grace*. But he bears the announcement that "*the hour of God's judgment is come.*" This refers to the sitting of the court of heaven, and the assumption of the sealed book by the Lamb, in order to open it. The angel does not bear "*THE everlasting gospel,*" but "*AN everlasting gospel;*" a gospel of eternal judgment. If it is asked how the announcement of the judgment having come can be good news to sinners, or to all nations, when it will seal their doom, the answer

is, in the same way that it is good news when Christ's instruction to his ministers is fulfilled, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." It is good news to the believer, and a message of terror to the unbeliever. So with this angel's message of judgment. It is good news to the saint, but will fill the sinner with terror. This angel will probably be a literal angel, who will announce his message to all the world with authority and power; as literal as the one who announced the gospel of our Saviour's birth. The message is most solemn and awakening. He proclaims, saying, "Fear God and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come." The command, or exhortation, to fear and give glory to God, does not imply conversion. Joshua used the same language to Achan, when convicted of crime for which he was to suffer death. He said, "My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him." And yet, if aught can alarm and lead to repentance lost sinners, one would think such an announcement from heaven would do it. "Worship him who made the universe." Such a proclamation must fill the world with dismay. But it will soon be forgotten, and men go heedlessly on. •

THE SECOND ANGEL. — BABYLON FALLEN.

Verse 8. "And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

This angel flies while the beast is yet in his strength; for it is he, who, with the ten kings, is to burn Babylon with fire, after making her desolate and naked, and eating her flesh, or plundering her of her wealth. The reason why her doom is pronounced, is because "she made all nations drunk with the wine of her fornication." The particulars of her fall are given in chapter xvii. 18, 19. There we learn that her fall consists of two parts: 1. By the wild beast and ten kings; 2. By the direct visitation of the Almighty.

THE SOLEMN WARNING AGAINST THE BEAST.

Verses 9-11. "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name."

The A. B. Union, render this, "And another, a third angel, followed them," &c. They are then a series, for they follow each other. But how long a time is to elapse between the proclamation of each is not intimated; but probably some considerable time. The message of this third angel is a most important one; and in order to be of service to men, it must be while the beast and his image are enforcing their claims on pain of death or disfranchisement. For it proclaims the terrible penalty of worshipping the beast or his image, or of receiving his mark in the forehead or hand. That penalty is, "to drink of the wine of the wrath of God which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his wrath." It is judgment without mercy or mitigation of pain. The Psalmist spoke of this cup of wrath (Ps. lxxv. 8). This cup, it will be seen, is mixed; "it is full of mixture;" and this he pours out for some. But to this there is no mixture. The unmitigated wrath of God is thus described. With a loud voice the angel proclaims, "If any one worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark in his forehead or on his hand, he also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his wrath." The cup will consist of this, "and shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb." This is not extinction of being, or unconsciousness,

but *torment*. This does not end the threat. He proceeds, "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever." What! will they never find rest from that torment, even by cessation of being? No, never. "They have no rest, day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name." The eternity of torment can be expressed in no stronger terms than those used in this awful proclamation.

Many there are, in our day, who do not hesitate to say, "I cannot and will not worship or love a God who will inflict such unending punishment on his creatures." But there it stands in God's revelation of his purpose; and there is a high degree of probability that he will make his word good, as he always has done in the past; and when it comes to pass, if the same spirit of rebellion reigns in their hearts, they can only join the beast in his war against God and the Lamb, in the battle of that great day of God Almighty, when "the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies are gathered together to make war on him that sits on the horse and his army."

"Be ye reconciled to God!"

Versé 12. "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

This is a reference to chapter xii. 17, where we are

told that the dragon went to make war "on the remnant of the woman's seed who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ;" and also to chapter xiii. 10; for it is under this beast's administration that the dragon's war is waged, and their faith and patience tested and developed; some by enduring death, and others by enduring the torments invented by the beast, the false prophet, and image.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF DYING IN THE LORD.

Verse 13. "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

This voice, too, comes out of heaven, saying, "Happy are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth;" that is, those who die in the Lord *from this time*, the time of the beast's war against the saints to fill up the rest of the martyrs' brethren who shall be killed as they were; whose souls were seen under the altar in heaven, when the fifth seal was opened. Then they were to rest a little season; but when the beast has done his work and the number is full, they all stand before the throne clothed in white stoles, and are eternally blessed. 1. They rest from their labors. 2. Their works follow them.

Verses 14-16. "And I looked, and behold, a white

cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped."

"They shall see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory," said Jesus. (Luke xxi. 27.) Such is the scene here presented — the Son of Man on a white cloud, coming with the command to reap the harvest of the earth.

"The harvest is the end of the world, the reapers are the angels."

Here Christ is seen with his crown of gold, but also with a sharp sickle to reap the harvest, and take it to his garner. It is "in the clouds of heaven" he is coming to "gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." (Matt. xxiv. 31.)

The court described in the fourth chapter conducts the whole proceeding; sometimes an elder speaks; sometimes a living creature; again, he who sits on the throne. And, anon, an angel is dispatched from the throne with a message. So, here, while the Messiah is seated on his cloudy chariot, ready to move forward on his mission of love to his saints, an angel proceeds from the temple with a message to the Son of God,

proclaiming that the hour has arrived for him to put in his sickle, and reap the precious fruits of his harvest-field.

At that announcement, the chariot of cloud moves earthward, and with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, dead and living, the elect of God, in one twinkling of an eye, are caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall they ever be with the Lord. And thus "the earth was reaped." The wheat are gathered into the garner. For "the good seed are the children of the kingdom," and they "shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Why may not the angel who cries with a loud voice to him who sits on the cloud, directing him to reap because the time is come, be the shout and voice of the archangel Gabriel, or Michael? At that moment one shall be taken and another left—in the field, in the mill, and in the bed, day and night.

THE VINTAGE GATHERED.

Verses 17-20. "And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the

vine of the earth, and cast it into the great wine-press of the wrath of God. And the wine-press was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the wine-press, even unto the horse-bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs."

Another angel, different from the one who directed the reaper on the white cloud, although, like him, he came from the temple in heaven. This time it is not the Son of Man who holds the sickle, and is to reap; but the angel himself, and he is ready for his work. The reaper-angel, having thus appeared and made himself ready, another angel still appears, coming from the altar, "who had power over fire." His instructions were addressed to the angel-reaper, directing him to "gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe."

This figure of a vintage and treading of the wine-press is introduced in the sixty-third chapter of Isaiah, where Christ is described as treading the wine-press alone, until his raiment was stained with blood. This angel, obedient to his instructions, put in his sickle and reaped the clusters, and cast them into the great wine-press of the wrath of God. The wine-press is the place where the wicked are to be slaughtered in the great battle. In Joel, the place is called "the Valley of Jehoshaphat," or Valley of Judgment. That valley is the valley of the Kedron, between Jerusalem and the Mount of Olives. "Multitudes, multitudes"

are to be gathered "in the valley of decision." The decision of the right of dominion is to be determined there between Christ and Satan. The heathen are all to be awakened, and come up to the fray.

But in Isaiah, chapter sixty-three, Christ is represented as coming from Edom, and from Bozrah, the capital of Edom, with his dyed garments; because there he has trodden the wine-press, and stained his raiment with their blood. But here, in Revelation, the wine-press is said to be "trodden without the city," meaning Jerusalem. This would place us just where Joel did — in the Valley of Jehoshaphat. But the extent of the stream of blood would carry us into and beyond Edom; for it flowed sixteen hundred furlongs, two hundred miles, up to the horse bridles. Take into the account that "the kings of the earth, and of the whole world," are called there to that great battle, with all their cavalry, their flocks, and horses, for the commissary department; and all these are given to the slaughter, and the flow of blood will scarcely be deemed incredible. The thirty-fourth chapter of Isaiah gives a more full account of the slaughter of animals as well as men, especially as it regards Idumea. "The sword of the Lord is filled with blood; it is made fat with fatness;" with lambs and goats, rams and unicorns, bullocks and bulls; so that "their land shall be soaked with blood and made fat with fatness."

CHAPTER XV.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE SEVEN LAST PLAGUES.

Verses 1-4. "And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest."

Still another scene opens in this chapter. It is a new series of judgments, to be inflicted especially on the worshipers of the beast, &c. Before they are poured out, a preparatory process is introduced, as there also was before the sounding of the seven trumpets.

— *A sign in heaven.* The vials, as delivered to the angels, were symbols; that is, they did not represent their own species. "In them is filled up the wrath of God." What they represent, then, is the concentration of the wrath of God, to be developed in seven

plagues on the wicked. They do not fall on the earth until the forty-two months of the beast's war on the saints is completed. For, before they fall, the victors over the beast and his image, mark, name, and number, that is, those who resisted at the expense of life, were seen in triumph. For another sign, or symbol, was shown, "as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire." It appeared like a clear, crystalline sea, reflecting a blaze of fire; and on it stood in triumph those who overcame Satan and his associates, the beast and his image, by loving not their lives unto the death: they stood on the transparent sea, having the harps of God. They were like Israel on the shores of the Red Sea, when they "sang the song of Moses," after their deliverance from the Egyptians. These celebrated the two deliverances, for they sing "the song of Moses" (see Ex. xv.), and also "the song of the Lamb."

That we have not in this line reached the resurrection and rapture of the church, we learn in the interlude between the sixth and seventh plagues, where Christ admonishes his people to be on the watch, for he will come as a thief. But the scene before us is before either plague comes; and hence the victors are in spirit the same as the palm-bearers of chapter seven. And this same company are once more presented, in chapter twenty, as the souls of them that were beheaded.

Verses 5-8. "And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened; and the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials, full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled."

"The temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened." This temple is so frequently brought to view that we can not doubt the reality of its existence. Moses had a view of it with its tabernacle of testimony, *the most holy place*, where the ark of the testament was deposited; and he was directed to make his tabernacle, in all things, like the pattern. This in heaven is "the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." But before the plagues were poured out it was opened; but no man could enter it until the seven plagues should be fulfilled.

These seven angels were invested with seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. These complete the series of plagues, or judgments, which precede the great battle in the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SEVEN LAST PLAGUES INFLICTED.

Verses 1, 2. "And I heard a great voice out of the temple, saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshiped his image."

When the plagues were inflicted on Egypt, Moses and Aaron were the agents by whom they were introduced. The rod was the selected instrument by which they were wrought. Each plague was then wrought by command of God to Moses and Aaron.

The seven last plagues are inflicted by seven angels. The command to inflict them still comes from God's holy temple; the vials are the selected instruments. "Go your ways," said the voice from the temple, "and do the work for which you are commissioned."

The first went and poured out his vial on the earth. This was the signal for the infliction of sore plagues; and accordingly they came — "a noisome and grievous sore." Just as when Moses, at the command of God, scattered ashes of the furnace towards heaven, and it broke out in boils and blains on man and beast

throughout Egypt, so here. The sore broke out on the men who had worshiped the beast and his image, and received his mark. They had enjoyed their time of triumph over the saints; and their day is come to drink the cup of wrath. (See Ex. ix. 8-11.)

Verse 3. "And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea."

The second plague followed, pouring forth the symbolical vial on the sea. The effect on the sea was, that it became clotted blood, as the blood of a dead man. No living thing in the sea could survive it, and accordingly they died. Such was the plague on Egypt, when Moses and Aaron stretched forth the rod at God's command over the river, and its waters became blood, and its fish died. (Ex. vii. 17-25.)

Verses 4-7. "And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters: and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments."

All the waters of fountains and rivers, as in Egypt,

so here, "became blood," and they had only blood to drink. The attending angels who gaze on the progress of the plagues proclaim the justice of God, and his righteousness, in such inflictions. "They have shed the blood of saints and prophets;" and thou hast recompensed them by giving "them blood to drink; for they are worthy" of it, or deserve it. It will be a day of terrible visitation on the persecutors of God's saints. It is manifest, as each of these plagues come, that they do not affect God's people any more than the plagues of Egypt affected Israel. The people of God were then safe, whatever came; for they were under divine protection. And so now, he will give his angels charge over them, that no evil will befall them, nor any plague come nigh their dwelling.

"The angel of the waters." It would seem from this phrase, that the world, during the progress of these events, is under the charge of angels in its different departments, and that one has charge of the waters, and another power over fire, &c.

Verses 8, 9. "And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory."

The plague affecting the sun will give it an inten-

sity of heat which will "scorch men as with fire;" but it produces no repentance, only rage and blasphemy against the God who has power over these plagues, and inflicts them. It is the spirit of rebellion excited to its highest pitch; like Pharaoh, in Egypt, they will writhe under the infliction, but repent not of their deeds.

Verses 10, 11. "And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds."

This plague, like the darkness which came on Egypt, will affect the kingdom of the beast, and stretch from the Euphrates to the Atlantic, but be especially felt at his capital, his seat, or throne. It will, like Egypt, be full of darkness which may be felt; so that none can discern his fellow. Then, it prevailed for three days and three nights; but how long in this plague, we have no knowledge given us. In the midst of the surrounding darkness, the pain of their sores, with no sights to divert their attention, will be intense. And, thus exasperated, they will still further give vent to their wickedness in blaspheming God because of their pains and sores, but not be moved to repent of their evil deeds.

Verses 12-14. "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates: and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the month of the beast, and out of the month of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

"The great river Euphrates" is a literal river of that name, uniting with the Tigris, and discharging its waters into the Persian Gulf. It passes through the midst of Old Babylon, dividing the site of that city into two parts. When Cyrus, a Persian prince, commanding the armies of his uncle, Darius, king of Media, was besieging Babylon, finding himself unable to take it by assault, or reduce it by famine, he adopted the stratagem of diverting or drawing off the waters of the river, and, thus drying it up, made a highway in its bed for his army to enter the city under its walls and take it, while the king was engaged in his drunken feast. This vial is to fall on that same river, and dry up its waters, and make a highway through its bed for "the kings of the east" to come from their several countries with their armies, to be present at the battle of that great day of God Almighty. This may be done by fissures in the earth under its bed, which will swallow up its upper waters and leave its bed dry.

That "*the great river Euphrates*" means *the Ottoman empire*, is a fancy of men, with no possible proof. It is an assumption which can not be substantiated. Some expositor at first devised the theory, and others have continued to repeat it. Had any one of them, from first to last, been put upon the proof that such was its meaning, the theory would have vanished as a shadow. There is a great river Euphrates, and it lies between the place of "the battle of that great day of God Almighty" and the eastern portions of Asia. Its drying up will facilitate the march of the vast armies from the sunrising, who are to be called to that great battle. Why call it, then, by any other than its true name?

Spirits like frogs. The devil, beast, and false prophet, or two-horned beast, are a trinity of evil, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are of good — "the mystery of godliness" and "the mystery of iniquity." Each of these persons sends out an unclean spirit — a demon — to go forth with power to work signs; to go to the kings of the whole world, "to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." The signs they will show will be of such character as to persuade the monarchs of a supernatural power on the part of the beast and his legions, sufficient to cope with the greatest odds, and to overcome.

The same class of spirits existed in the time of Christ, and are in the Gospels variously called, *demons*.

and *unclean spirits*. They then possessed men, and exerted in and through them such power as to break the strongest chains, so that these whom they possessed could not be bound. The spirits who possess mediums and perform various operations in our day confess themselves to be of the same class as those called demons in the days of Christ. But these who go forth on this mission appear to be possessed of extraordinary power, and to be commissioned by the chiefs of the conspiracy, and go forth at a particular time, that is, under the action of the sixth plague.

"The battle of that great day of God Almighty" is the same as the treading of the wine-press, and is usually called by expositors of prophecy "*the battle of Armageddon*." But this is a misapprehension. The Bible teaches no such thing as "the battle of Armageddon;" the name given in verse fourteen is its only name.

Verses 15, 16. "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon."

The speaker in verse fifteen is Christ, warning his people of his sudden coming to gather his elect. Just as God warned the Israelites of their sudden departure from Egypt on the night when the first born were slain, under the last plague on Egypt, and charged

them not to sit or lie down, to keep on their coats, shoes, hats, and have their loins girded for instant departure, just so, while the seventh and last plague is pending, he calls his people to be constantly ready to meet him in the air.

And those who heed his note of warning are blest, and will be gathered by the Saviour "into a place called in the *Hebrew tongue*, ARMAGEDDON." It will be seen, then, that it is not the unclean spirits gathering the kings of the earth into *Armageddon* for battle, but Christ gathering those who watch and keep their garments, into ARMAGEDDON, for safety, rest, and deliverance.

The usual interpretation of the word is, "the Mountain of Megiddo," near the city of Megiddo. But no such mountain exists there. Nor does the etymology of the word admit of that construction. The Hebrew *Har* signifies *mount*; the Hebrew *Megid* signifies *destruction* — "Mount of Destruction." But this word is not *Har*, — *mount*, but *Ar*, — *city*. It is not *Megid*, — *destruction*, but *Magid*, — *illustrious*, *august*, *noble*. Hence it is not *mount of destruction*, but the *illustrious*, or *august city*; the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, to which Christ will take his people to celebrate the marriage supper of the Lamb. (See Rev. Joseph Berg, D. D., on *Armageddon*.)

Verses 17-21. "And the seventh angel poured out

his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great."

Simultaneously with the rapture of the saints at the coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven will come the last plague, and nature will be convulsed. The plague will be universal, being poured into the air, diffusing itself over the globe, while a voice from the throne proclaims, It is done! Instantly, voices, thunders, lightnings, earthquake, and hail, commingle throughout earth and air — an earthquake more terrible than ever before transpired. *The great city* is that of which a tenth part fell on the ascension of the two witnesses into heaven; now it is divided into three parts; "the cities of the nations fell;" all cities must by so terrible an earthquake be shaken down. And at this moment, also, "great Babylon," which will already have been sacked by the *wild beast* and

ten kings, will receive her final infliction, by sinking in the deep like a millstone cast into the sea. The islands and mountains are removed or disappear; hail falls, every stone of which is about a hundred and twenty-five pounds, troy weight. This is the hail of which the Almighty questioned Job. "Hast thou seen the treasures of hail which I have reserved against the time of trouble?" (Job xxxviii. 22.) Thus will the poor sinner be exposed to that merciless storm when once the saints who are now "the salt of the earth" shall have left. In the days of Noah the world "knew not, until the flood came and took them all away. So shall it be in the day when the Son of Man shall be revealed." Reader, have you secured a shelter in Christ against that day? If not, do it at once, for his arms stand open wide to receive and welcome you: It was too late for the antediluvians when once the flood began to fall, and God had shut Noah in the ark. So also in that day it will be said, "Ho that is righteous, let him be righteous still," "and he that is filthy be filthy still."

CHAPTER XVII.

GREAT BABYLON AND HER JUDGMENT.

Verses 1-5. "And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will show unto thee

the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters; with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet color, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

The angels charged with the infliction of the seven last plagues have another mission to perform besides that work of wrath. One of the seven is sent to give to John a view of Babylon's judgment already announced. (Chap. xiv. 8.) In doing so he first exhibits her as a great harlot being carried to her judgment on a beast on which she is seated, and shows her doom by the ten kings. Then he is shown how God will deal with her by casting her down into the deep in a moment, to be seen no more at all. The angel said, "Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth on many waters."

He, as when called up to heaven, was "carried away in spirit into the wilderness." In that position he was shown a woman sitting on a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads

and ten horns. This beast is, in some respects, like the leopard beast in chapter thirteen. This, instead of being covered with the leopard's spots, is scarlet-colored; instead of having ten crowns on his horns, is crownless. That is said to have come from the sea; this from the bottomless pit. And yet there is so near a resemblance that we are compelled to regard them as one, only as exhibited at different periods of their history. In the thirteenth chapter he is exhibited in the freshness and beauty of his youth; in the seventeenth chapter, after his wars, stained with the blood of his victims. This rising *then* from the sea, and *now* from the abyss, may be understood as his coming up *from* the abyss *through* the sea; for he was a dead beast restored to life, and therefore appropriately described as coming from the bottomless pit, the region of the dead. It was not needful that the crowns on his horns should be again noticed, as they had once been mentioned. His names of blasphemy were then on his heads; but now they cover him.

The prevailing thought among students of prophecy is, that the woman rides the beast as his guide, or driver; but the idea of the text is, that he is bearing her to execution, or judgment. Her person is enchanting; being gaudily dressed, and decked with gold, pearls, and rarest jewels; bearing in her hand a golden cup filled with an intoxicating and bewitching draught, by which to beguile her paramours. But her

name is inscribed on her forehead, in legible lines, "*Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.*" Who can she be? Is she Babylon of old? "I wondered with great admiration." She ~~was~~ intoxicated herself, with the blood of the saints; and for herself she was prepared to intoxicate the world with the *filthiness of her fornication*. But it was the mission of the angel to explain. So he said, "I will tell thee the mystery of the woman and of the beast which carrieth her."

Verses 6-11. "And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not, and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder (whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world), when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition."

The woman was drunken with the blood of saints.

She, then, has been a persecutor. In chapter eighteen, the holy apostles and prophets are called on to rejoice over her, because God had avenged them on her. That old Babylon was a persecutor of saints and prophets, is true; that Peter, one of the holy apostles, was there, and wrote one of his letters from it, sending the salutation of the saints of Babylon, as Paul did those of Rome, is also true. May she not be Babylon of old, restored to glory and power?

The beast carrying the woman is one which once was, but at John's writing was not; but at a time then future should come from the bottomless pit and go into perdition, the lake of fire—to be eternally tormented. We have seen, in chapter thirteen, that this was the Grecian power restored.

"The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth." It is this feature which has led so many to regard Rome as the apocalyptic Babylon, because she is built on seven hills. This seems natural and plausible. But other things must correspond as well as her mountains, before we come to a definite conclusion. There is another interpretation, and that is, "There are seven kings." These are also represented by the seven heads, and will be found in the history of the beast when he comes. He being future, we cannot yet identify these kings, for as Solomon says, "What is wanting cannot be numbered." We take the interpretation both as to the mountains

and kings on trust, and wait for the fulfillment in due time. At the time this scene is introduced, five of the seven kings were fallen, one existed, and the other was yet to come. But the beast himself is the eighth king in the series, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition, as he is the last of the whole series. He reaches his perdition when Christ, the King of kings, takes both him and his prophet alive, and casts them into the lake of fire.

Verses 12-17. "And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled."

"The ten horns are ten kings;" they are identical with the horns of Daniel's fourth beast, and will have divided the entire Roman empire between them, from the Euphrates to the Atlantic. They are

not a part of the beast originally; but they form an alliance among themselves, and agree to give their power, and strength, and kingdom to the beast, making him the ruler of the whole dominion east and west; and thus they constitute his horns.

"These" — the ten kings and wild beast — "shall make war with the Lamb," at his coming, and in the great battle; "and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings."

"The waters where the whore sat are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues;" all of whom have been taken in her toils and pay her tribute. "These ten horns, with the beast, shall hate the harlot." She will stand in their way and excite their hatred, and they will sack the city, and break her power.

The reason why the ten kings give their power to the beast and do this work is, that "God hath put it into their hearts to fulfill his will and to agree" to this alliance until his word "shall be fulfilled."

Verse 18. "And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth."

The woman. She is "that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth;" a city governing kings, instead of kings governing the city. She is "Babylon the great." That she is not Rome is evident, for she governs no kings, but is reduced to a provincial

city, or at most the capital of one of the ten kings. Babylon is to be a commercial city, so great that her fall will convulse all the commerce and manufactures of the world, and fill it with consternation. The sinking of Rome could not do this. Nor is there any other city in existence of so much importance as to produce such results by its fall. As the beast is future, why may not the city be the same?

THE RULING POWER OF EARTH.

What is the ruling power of the world? Rome is not. The church of Rome is not. France is not. There is no nation who occupies that pre-eminence. But commerce does do it. She, as a power, monopolizes legislation; she leads to the formation of international treaties; she builds railroads through trackless deserts, and under and over mountains; she cuts canals; she builds and runs lines of steamers and sailing craft; she projects, erects, and lays telegraph lines around the world, over mountains, under seas and oceans, along dangerous coasts; she builds lighthouses, plants buoys; establishes observatories; transmits, the world over, reliable information of yesterday, and prognosticates the storms and winds of to-morrow; she monopolizes the press, holding it to her service; she tells us at the breakfast-table the state of the markets of the world yesterday, and how to do business to-day. She has her centers in every land, from which her mandates

go forth. No power in the world, no state, nation, or kingdom, is sufficiently strong to defy her demands with impunity. She needs, and she will have, a common center, a common currency, common weights and common measures. This last is the problem the nations are endeavoring to solve. Has not divine wisdom forescen and foretold this result, and where that center shall be located?

THE EPHAH AND TALENT OF LEAD.

Zec. v. verses 5-11. "Then the angel that talked with me went forth, and said unto me, Lift up now thine eyes, and see what is this that goeth forth. And I said, What is it? And he said, This is an ephah that goeth forth. He said moreover, This is their resemblance through all the earth. And, behold, there was lifted up a talent of lead: and this is a woman that sitteth in the midst of the ephah. And he said, This is wickedness. And he cast it into the midst of the ephah; and he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof. Then lifted I up mine eyes, and looked, and, behold, there came out two women, and the wind was in their wings (for they had wings like the wings of a stork); and they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven. Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah? And he said unto me, To build it a house in the land of Shinar: and it shall be established, and set there upon her own base."

This ephah is a measure; and this is, said the angel; to be a common measure. "Moreover this is their resemblance throughout the earth." The whole world

will adopt it. The measure is also a symbol of commerce. The prophet looked again, and he said, "I see a talent of lead." This, said the angel, "is a woman that sitteth in the midst of the ephah." "This is wickedness; and he cast it into the midst of the ephah; and he cast the weight of lead on the top of it;" he shut up the woman with weight and measure, the two symbols of commerce, and symbol of a city. For a woman is the symbol of a city.

Next came two women with wings like a stork; and the wind was in their wings. Seeing them take the ephah and lift it up, the prophet asked, "Whither do these bear the ephah?" The angel replied, "To build it a house in the land of Shinar. And it shall be established there upon her own base." Does this signify that a commerce, universal, is to be established in the land of Shinar, the region of Babylon, on the banks of Euphrates? What else can be made of it? Are not the most gigantic efforts of commerce directed to reach the east in both directions, east and west, with the greatest possible facility? To this end Pacific Railroads are built, Darien Canal projected, Mont Cenis tunnel excavated, Suez Canal cut, lines of steamers established for both the Atlantic and Pacific. To facilitate commerce, India and China are being intersected with railroad lines. And already the project is in progress for a line of railroads from London by way of Calais to Brussels, passing north

of the Alps to the Bosphorus, through Asia Minor, north of Lebanon, to the Euphrates, and from thence to the East Indies; London and Constantinople are principally interested. This will make *Shinar*, or *Babylon*, a great commercial center, and probably restore that ancient city to her former glory. The land of *Shinar* is one of the most fertile regions in the world. But an objection is raised against the idea of *Babylon*'s being rebuilt, founded on the prediction of her everlasting desolation. (Isa. xiii. 19-22.)

This is certainly a very strong prediction, and if it relates to the past she can not be restored. But has such a desolation ever come on her? Is *Babylon* like "Sodom and Gomorrah"? She did not share their fate when the Medes and Persians overthrew *Belshazzar*. The city, it is true, was taken, and the king was slain. But that any considerable slaughter of its inhabitants took place no history records. On the contrary, the Medes and Persians seem to have made it one of their royal cities, so that *Cyrus*, in the first year of his reign, was called king of *Babylon*, and commanded the vessels of the house of God to be taken from the temple of *Babylon* and returned to *Jerusalem*. (Ez. v. 13, 14.) Also in the seventh year, of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, he dwelt at *Babylon*, and from thence *Ezra* started for *Judea*. (Ez. vii. 6-9.)

At the time of the death of *Alexander*, it was the capital of the Grecian empire, and there the great

conqueror died. St. Peter wrote his First Epistle from the place, and the saints of Babylon saluted those to whom he wrote.

And to this day there is in the very midst of the site of old Babylon a city (Hillah) of ten thousand inhabitants. So, also, do shepherds now make their folds there, and the Arabians do pitch their tents there. If the prediction has not yet been fulfilled, — and it has not, — then it will be in the future. Whoever will read Isaiah, chapter thirteen, with care, will see that it will be in "the day of the Lord" that the destruction will come upon her.

We are in A. D. 1872, and it is not done; so that, if ever done, it must be in *the day of the Lord.*" It is not, however, that she is simply a seat of royalty, that she receives power to reign over the kings of the earth, as did Nebuchadnezzar; but it arises from her commercial greatness, which controls the world.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE FINAL SINKING OF BABYLON.

Verses 1-3. "And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all na-

tions have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies."

After the sacking of Babylon by the kings, an angel comes from heaven, probably the same as described xiv. 8, proclaiming with a loud voice, the fall of Babylon, and that she is in the condition described Isa. xiii., "a hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." There must be a destruction that is partial, first, that will render it still habitable, but yet greatly impair its beauty and affect its importance; and another destruction that will make it like Sodom and Gomorrah, entirely uninhabitable by any creatures, as the prophet describes it. (Isa. xiii.)

Verses 4-8. "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her."

In this paragraph we have still further evidence that her first fall leaves the city as a sacked place, but still inhabited in parts. For there will be there some of God's people to whom the heavenly voice will call to leave her, as Lot was called to leave Sodom before the storm of fire and brimstone fell on her; so that they shall not be partakers of her plagues. She is to be rewarded double for all the evil she has inflicted on the people of God. Her sins will have reached to heaven, and God will have remembered her iniquities. Her proud boast of being a queen city, and reigning over the world, will be the signal for her overthrow and torment; and that overthrow will be sudden and short; for in one hour she is made desolate. The result of the sacking will be death, mourning, and famine. And sinking in the fiery gulf will be her terrible end.

LAMENT OF THE KINGS.

The kings of the earth who were her paramours are to bewail her burning, and be filled with fear of her torment, as we read in

Verses 9, 10. "And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas! that great city, Babylon that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come."

THE MERCHANTS' LAMENT.

Babylon the great being the center of commerce for the world, her fall will derange all commercial interests, and those engaged in commerce will weep and mourn that no man buyeth their merchandise any more. The great variety of articles of traffic embrace all luxuries, with some necessaries of life, and are enumerated in

Verses 11-16. "And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more. The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, and cinnamon, and odors, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men. And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off, for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, and saying, Alas, alas, that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!"

LAMENT OF SHIPMASTERS AND SAILORS.

Commercial agents, as well as merchants, will at once be displaced from lucrative pursuits by Babylon's fall. And their lament and its cause is reported in

Verses 17-19. "For in one hour so great riches is come to naught. And every ship-master, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, and cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas! that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate."

Next comes the call on those who have suffered from her persecutions, to rejoice over her fall.

Verses 20. "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her."

BABYLON'S FINAL FALL.

Her final fall is to be by the direct action of Almighty power, as under the seventh vial, when we are told that "Great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the fierceness of the wine of the wrath of Almighty God."

Verse 21. "And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great mill-stone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all."

The symbol of her final overthrow is significant of her sinking into the fiery gulf beneath her. A mighty angel cast a stone like a great millstone into the deep, saying, *Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be cast down, and be found no more at all.* Then will it be literally true as stated in

Verses 22, 23. "And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a mill-stone shall be heard no more at all in thee; and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived."

The closing verse of the chapter gives the reason why she thus perishes.

Verse 24. "And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."

She, like Jerusalem, approving and practicing the deeds of their fathers, inherits their guilt, and receives their punishment. This city filling the cup, receives the most terrible of all the plagues. She sinks into the lake of fire!

CHAPTER XIX.

REJOICINGS IN HEAVEN OVER BABYLON'S FALL.

It is at the time of the pouring of the seventh vial into the air that Babylon sinks, and the saints rise to meet their Lord in the air, and are escorted to heaven to celebrate the marriage supper of the Lamb in *Armageddon*, the illustrious city. It is therefore no matter of wonder that all heaven's hosts should rejoice at her downfall. 1. Because they are thus avenged on her; and, 2. Because of their own glory, as will be seen in

Verses 1-6. "And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshiped God, that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

The voice of much people in heaven refers to the saints of human kind. And as they rejoiced, "her smoke went up:" not for a short space, but "for ever and ever." The twenty-four elders and four living creatures also, the representatives of the saints before the throne, fall worshipping him who sits upon it. A voice proceeding from the throne also commands all God's servants, small and great, to join in his praise.

In response to this direction from the throne of God, a universal burst of acclamation rings through all the heavenly arches, "as it were, a voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings;" all the strongest and most significant comparisons which can be devised are selected to express the majesty of that response; "saying, Alleluia; The Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us rejoice and be glad, and give honor to him."

THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB CELEBRATED.

The hosts of heaven are thus summoned to rejoice, not only to celebrate the Almighty's triumph over Babylon, but to encourage each other in rejoicing that the marriage of the Lamb is come, and that his wife (more properly, his betrothed) hath made herself ready for the nuptials.

Verses 7-9. "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her

was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God."

The bride is usually understood to be the church. But there is an evident distinction here made between the bride and the guests. They who are called are guests, not the bride. When the angel promised to show John "the bride, the Lamb's wife," he showed him "that great city, the New Jerusalem." The allegory of Paul makes the "Jerusalem which is above, and is free" the mother of all the saints. Then the celebration of the marriage of the Lamb is the eternal union of Christ with the holy city, and the investing of all her children with the rights and privileges of citizenship. That this scene is to be realized just as it is here described, we are assured in these words: "These are the true sayings of God." Why, then, should we doubt their literality.

WORSHIP REJECTED BY THE ANGEL.

Verse 10. "And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See *thou* do it not: I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

It would seem that this was a human angel, the

fellow-servant of John and his brethren, who also had the testimony of Jeens. That testimony is the spirit pervading all prophecy. It was the spirit of Christ which was in the old prophets and "testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory which should follow." (1 Pet. i. 11, 12.)

God alone is the one to be worshiped.

THE GREAT BATTLE OF GOD ALMIGHTY.

Verses 11-16. "And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse; and he that sat upon him *was* called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and on his head *were* many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew but he himself. And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies *which were* in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

The Lord, in the hundred and tenth Psalm, invites Jesus to occupy a seat at his right hand until he shall make his foes his footstool. Then he promises to send the rod of his strength out of Zion, and to give him authority to "rule in the midst of his enemies." Then

he will "wound the heads over many countries, and fill the places with the dead bodies."

So, also, in second Psalm, he makes a similar promise, saying, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. And thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." The time has at length arrived, as seen by John, for his enemies to be made his footstool, and be dashed in pieces. Christ's coming in the clouds of heaven for his saints to take them from earth to meet him in the air, and to celebrate the marriage supper in the New Jerusalem, is one thing; and his coming in warlike pomp and majesty with his saints, to conquer for them a kingdom under the whole heaven, is quite another event, and must follow, not precede, the other.

The opening of heaven is the parting of the aerial firmament, as when Jesus came up straightway out of the baptismal water, and the heaven was opened unto him. So John, in vision, "saw heaven opened, and lo, a white horse" and his majestic rider appeared. This same symbol appeared in heaven on the opening of the first seal; only he had a single crown on his head, and a bow to commence his conquests. He was a *pseudo-Christ*. But now the *true Christ* comes as King of kings; comes from heaven to earth decked

with *many diadems*, the symbols of universal dominion. The *Stephanos* crown, which was given the anti-Christ, was the symbol of *kingly* power. The "*many diademata*," the symbol of *imperial* power, rule over all kings and kingdoms. The *vesture* dipped in blood is the same as Isaiah saw, chapter sixty-three, when the same personage appeared treading the wine-press of God's wrath. So the treading of the wine-press and this impending battle are identical. The name inscribed on this mighty conqueror is, *The Word of God* — the same name which is given him by John in the first chapter of his Gospel, and who, he there says, was made flesh, and dwelt among us.

But he does not come alone: all the armies of heaven follow him on white horses, to be the witnesses of his victories, and assent to the justice of his proceedings. In Isaiah, chapter sixty-three, he says, "I have trodden the wine-press alone." Here, also, it is said, "The remnant were slain with the sword of him that sitteth on the horse." So that, although the heavenly armies come with Jesus, he needs not their help. Here, as in Isaiah, it is expressly said that he treadeth the wine-press of the wrath of God. Here, too, we have the declaration that it is he who breaks his foes with the iron rod, as he is promised in the second Psalm. *The Word of God* is not the only name he bears on his vesture: the other is, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

THE SUPPER OF GOD AND HIS GUESTS.

Verses 17, 18. "And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great."

The marriage supper of the Lamb is the feast of fat things which the Lord promised to his people in the twenty-fifth chapter of Isaiah. But this is a supper of human and brute flesh, which birds of prey and ravenous beasts may eat, slaughtered by the sword of *the Word of God*. Noble and ignoble, monarch and subject, master and slave, small and great, alike shall be their feast.

Verses 19-21. "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshiped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."

We have seen that the heavenly forces consist of Jesus Christ, and the armies of heaven prepared for war, and that the beasts and fowls are summoned to devour the slain. So did David, the antitype of Christ, when he fought the battle of God, with the armies of Israel for witnesses, give his giant foe, and the armies of the Philistines, saying, "I will give the carcasses of the host of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel." (1 Sam. xvii. 46.)

The beast is the one who bears the woman to her judgment. It will be remembered that he has seven heads and ten horns. These ten horns are expressly declared to make war on the Lamb, and to be overcome by him in the battle that follows. We are also told that the dragon, beast, and false prophet, each, send forth a demon, to the kings of the earth and the whole world, to stir them up to battle. The result is here described: the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies are all there; and Christ goes forth, David-like, while the armies of heaven gaze with breathless interest at the conflict which ensues. The beast, and false prophet, the beast's chief minister, are taken, and these both are cast alive into the lake of fire and brimstone. This lake "is the second death." It would seem to indicate that the men bearing the designation of beast and false prophet will, in more

than a figurative sense, come from the bottomless pit, hades, the place of the dead ; so that having died once, and been in hades, and then resurrected, their doom now, is " the lake of fire, the second death."

The remnant, the kings and armies of earth, " were slain by " Christ ; and the fowls devoured their flesh, and their spirits were shut up in the pit. The same scene is also described in the glowing words of the prophet Isaiah, chapter xxiv. 21, 22. " And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited."

Those shut up in the pit are the kings of the earth and their armies, slain in the conflict of that great day of God Almighty ; and they are imprisoned for a thousand years ; and shall then be visited and live again, to receive their final doom, the lake of fire, into which the beast and false prophet have already been cast, and whose terrors they are experiencing, when this dread event is consummated.

CHAPTER XX.

THE MILLENNIUM.

Verses 1-3. "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."

The beast, false prophet, kings, and armies of the preceding chapter, who arrayed themselves against Christ and his army, having been disposed of, Satan, their leader, is to be also captured and confined. The Son of Man is the victor of chapter nineteen; an angel, probably Michael, who drove Satan from heaven, seizes and binds him with such a chain as will bind a spiritual being, and confines him in the abyss for a thousand years; at the close he will be loosed a little season.

Verses 4-6. "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thou-

sand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

Thrones — they sat on them. They: no antecedent for this word occurs except chapter xix. 14: "The armies which were in heaven." They are glorified saints, who return from heaven with their king to the great battle. Dan. vii. 22, it is said that at the coming of the Ancient of Days, "judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom." The judgment was awarded when the Ancient of Days came (chapter vi.); but the saints are enthroned only when the usurper and his hosts are overthrown. This company embraces all the saints of all time. "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them," and the court awarded judgment in their favor, that they were the rightful heirs of "the kingdom under the whole heaven." This is promised to the saints of the Most High. (Dan. vii. 27.) "*The souls of them that were beheaded,*" &c. These are first presented in these visions under the fifth seal, chapter six. Then they were furnished with *white stoles*, priestly garments, and were to rest a little season, waiting to be avenged. Now they appear among the *enthroned saints*; for they are only a part

of that company; and we are told that instead of remaining disembodied souls of the beheaded, "they lived;" that is, had been resurrected, having part with all other saints in "the first resurrection." For all saints are to be raised at one time; "Christ, the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." "We shall not all sleep, but all shall be changed; in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." This must embrace all saints who are dead and all who are living and are victors over the beast, &c.; for they will be of the last generation, who shall be raised or changed.

Why, then, it may be asked, are these presented as a separate company? It is because they will have been subjected to peculiar sufferings under the "great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to that time," and are worthy of special mention as having overcome so great trials of their faith and patience. In warfare, it is a universal practice to make particular mention of the specially brave, and to confer on them peculiar honor.

"*This is the first resurrection.*" Will the first resurrection be literal? It will. 1. It follows the sounding of the seventh trumpet, under which the dead are judged, and Christ receives the award of the eternal kingdom of this world; and all God's servants are

rewarded, small and great: 2. It follows the marriage supper of the Lamb, when Christ receives all his people to himself, and celebrates the occasion in the New Jerusalem. 3. It is the kingdom of God and Christ, in which all the enthroned reign; but flesh and blood can not inherit the kingdom of God. They must therefore have been immortalized by resurrection and change, to inherit the kingdom. 4. No state of universal holiness can exist until the harvest, which is the end of the world, when the wicked shall be gathered out of his kingdom, and the righteous shine like the sun in it. This will have been done when this scene occurs. Finally, if the principle maintained in this work, that the visions of the Apocalypse are an exhibition of the scenes of the day of judgment, is correct, then this question is forever settled.

"The rest of the dead" implies that the enthroned ones had been dead, but were now alive, and that others were dead in the same sense in which these had been, and that these "rest" will not live again until the thousand years of Satan's imprisonment and the saints' reign are fulfilled. If these who live and reign were only spiritually dead, and their resurrection simply means their conversion, then the rest of the dead are only spiritually dead, and their living again must mean their conversion at the end of a thousand years. If so, all these "rest" of the unconverted must remain sinners during a thousand years,

and not a soul be converted during all that period. The absurdity of the view is its refutation. But the connection in which the passage stands, following the marriage supper of the Lamb, clearly proves the first resurrection to be a bodily resurrection of all the saints. That they have priority of resurrection over the wicked, and are a class by themselves, is proved by such passages as these: "afterward they that are Christ's at his coming;" "the resurrection of the just;" "I will raise him up at the last day," &c. The first resurrection, therefore, is that of the just. The only designation of the time to elapse between the two is in the passage now under consideration; and this is so distinct as to render it unmistakable.

The *Whitbyan* theory of the resurrection of the *martyr spirit* has the same absurdity to contend with as the conversion theory—that after this wonderful development of the *martyr spirit* on the binding of Satan, and consequent establishment of universal peace, no more martyr spirits will arise for a thousand years. "Its absurdity is its refutation." The theory is a novelty not known in the early church. Whitby acknowledged it to be "a new theory."

THE THOUSAND YEARS EXPIRED.

Verses 7-10. "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather

them together to battle : the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city : and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

The paragraph from verses four to six covers a period nowhere else touched in the Apocalypse — the events of the millennium. The passage now before us is of the same character ; it describes what no other passage of the Apocalypse speaks of — the events which follow the millennium.

Those events are, 1. The loosing of Satan from his prison, the bottomless pit. 2. The finding, on the four quarters of the earth, an innumerable multitude of human beings, like the sand of the sea for numbers. 3. Satan going forth to deceive them, and gather them around the camp of the saints, and the beloved city — the New Jerusalem — under the pretense of a battle with Christ and his saints. 4. The overthrow of the whole host of the wicked by fire, which comes out of heaven and devours them. 5. The devil, their deceiver, is taken again and "cast into the lake of fire, where the beast and false prophet are."

The question now presents itself, who are these hosts whom Satan finds in the four quarters of the

earth? The implication given by the fifth verse, that the rest of the dead will live again when the thousand years are finished, would furnish just such a multitude as is described — the resurrected wicked.

But it is asked, How can Satan deceive them, after they all know God's power? So it might be asked, How could Pharaoh have been so deceived, after all he had seen of God's power, as to follow Israel into the midst of the Red Sea, with his whole army? The answer is the same in both cases: they were abandoned of God, and left to their own corrupt and perverse wills.

The beloved city evidently means the New Jerusalem. In and around it the saints will be encamped, awaiting the last desperate assault. For after the warning of this passage, it will not take them by surprise. Nor will they be filled with fear because of their ignorance of the deliverance awaiting them.

"Fire came down from God out of heaven and DEVoured them." The fire which came from God and *devoured* Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron, when they offered strange fire before the Lord, simply killed them, without burning their clothes. (Lev. x. 1-5.) "And there went out fire from the Lord, and *devoured* them, and they died before the Lord. Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the Lord spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And

Aaron held his peace. And Moses called Mishaël and Elzaphan, the sons of Uzziel, the uncle of Aaron, and said unto them, Come near, and carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp. So they went near, and carried them in their coats out of the camp, as Moses had said." So that being *devoured* by fire from God does not necessarily imply being burned up. The Greek verb here used, καταφαγω — *katephagoo*, is used in reference to Christ. (John ii. 17.) "The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up." The idea is, that he was absorbed in zeal for the house of God. It signifies to *swallow*, as a bird does grain. "Some seed fell by the wayside, and the fowls of the air came and *devoured* it." (Matt. xiii. 4.) This word in the passage before us seems to imply a fiery *cyclone*, which shall absorb them, and cast them into the lake of fire; for that is the final doom of all who are not written in the book of life.

The devil was cast into the lake of fire. The beast and false prophet met that fate at the beginning of the millennium; they were cast there alive, and will have continued there alive and suffering a thousand years, during which time the devil will be in the bottomless pit. They will still be there when their old associate will be cast in with them. "And *they*," the devil, beast, and false prophet, "shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." There can be no stronger form of expression to indicate the eternity

of torment than is here used. 1. The beast and false prophet have endured it a thousand years. 2. The millennial period is ended, and the eternal ages are begun when the devil is cast there, and they, the trio, shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. It must be eternal. The same everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels is that into which the wicked will be bid depart. (Matt. xxv. 41.) This seems a terrible doom; and so it is. But the God who has never failed to fulfill his severest threats on the impenitent will not fail to fulfill his faithful word even to this extent. Our unbelief will not make "the faith of God of none effect." Our rebellion against his authority may affect us and our action, but it can never change his word, or plans, in any degree. For every, short-sighted man to assume the judgment seat, and declare that it is unjust and cruel for God to inflict eternal sufferings on any of his creatures, and then to declare, as many do, "I can neither love nor worship such a God," savors strongly of terrible rebellion. "While the earth continues, day and night shall not cease," is God's covenant.

THE GENERAL JUDGMENT.

Verses 11-15. "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened: and another

book was opened, which is *the book of life*: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

The general judgment, where the books were opened, is first, in the divine visions, presented to us in the seventh chapter of Daniel. There its session is introduced as taking place *while the horn is speaking his great words*. That certainly precedes the millennium. So, also, when the seventh trumpet sounds, the four and twenty elders proclaim, "Thy wrath is come, and *the time of the dead* that they should be *judged*." That also precedes the millennium. But the judgment now introduced is the judgment of the dead, and therefore must be the judgment under the seventh trumpet; hence we must understand it, not as consecutive to the casting of Satan into the lake of fire, but as going back to a scene, under the seventh trumpet, then hinted at, but not fully presented to the vision of the prophet, but now brought forward as a distinct scene.

As has been intimated before, there must be a general judgment before the coming of Christ, and

the resurrection, and rapture of the saints, and an award be rendered to each one of the race of Adam. For the resurrection is an executive proceeding. "In the twinkling of an eye" the saints will be glorified and immortalized, and caught up to meet the Lord. This must be in accordance with a preceding trial or adjudication. So, also, the Savior (Matt. xxv. 31-46) teaches that at his coming, and separation of the righteous and wicked, he will pronounce the final, irrevocable doom on both parties, and assign the reason for the sentence pronounced on each — a sentence from which there will be no appeal, and no rehearing granted.

The *judicial* proceeding is indicated by the standing of the dead, small and great, before God, who sits on the judgment throne, where *the books* are opened. These are the books of records of each one's doings, sayings, and thoughts. But another book was opened; it was the book of character, "the book of life." Every saint is written there, and the fact of being found written there attests his holy character. It needs no other evidence of his being in Christ. The fact of its being there, and being opened, is the proof that the *subjects* of this judgment are saints as well as sinners. The other books will attest what men have done. And each one will be judged out of *the books according to their works*.

THE EXECUTIVE JUDGMENT.

As verses eleven and twelve exhibit the *judicial* proceeding on the dead, small and great, who stand before God *in spirit as dead*, to be judged according to the testimony of the *books*, so verses 13-15 give us the executive proceeding, without distinguishing, as before, between the two resurrections. That having been done already, it is now only needful to show that the dead will be raised in order to receive their award. In this executive work we are told that the sea gave up the dead which were in it. Death, here used as a substitution for the grave, gave up its dead. Hades gave up the dead it held; that is, the souls of men. For it is the *soul*, not the *body*, hades retains in custody. It was not the body of the rich man which in *hades* lifted up his eyes, being in torment; for it was buried. It was not the *flesh* of Christ, or David, which was not left in hades, but his *soul*. (Ps. xvi.; Acts ii. 32.) Hades, or the under world, will be dispossessed. And being thus dispossessed, by the resurrection, of its subjects, there will be no further use for it, and it shall be cast into the lake of fire. That is, the barriers now existing between it and the lake of fire in the subterranean world will be removed, and all merged in one. So, also, the angel of death, being of no further service, since the first

death has filled his mission, is also cast into the lake of fire. "This is the second death." Next, and finally, in this executive proceeding, comes the doom of the finally impenitent, who, not being found written in the book of life, are also "cast into the lake of fire."

If it is asked, How can the dead stand before God while dead? the answer is given in the words of the apostle. (1 Pet. iv. 6.) "For this cause the gospel was preached" by Christ when he went and "preached to the spirits in prison," "to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to," or *in the same manner as*, "men in the flesh, but live according to," or *in the same manner as*, "God in spirit." For the word *xata*, here used, can only mean *likeness* — *like God*.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE NEW STATE.

Verses 1-5. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from

their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write; for these words are true and faithful."

The last verses of chapter twenty, having disposed of those not found written in *the book of life* in the lake of fire, a home for the saints is now to be introduced. And it must be in accordance with God's original plan and preparation when he laid the foundation of the *αἰῶνος*. For that, the Savior informs us, is "the kingdom prepared" for those on his right hand in the day of judgment, — the earth in its beauty, — as it was when "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."

So, to the raptured vision of John there appeared what God by the pen of Isaiah (lxv. 17) had so long before foretold — "a new heaven and a new earth." This, too, would answer to the faith of Abraham, who was promised an everlasting possession and inheritance for himself and seed in *the land of Canaan*, where he only *sojourned* in this life. Why? Because, says Paul, "he looked for a better country, that is, a heavenly." Nor was the heavenly country all for which he looked; for, also, "he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." And this is just the thing revealed to the gaze of the

entranced seer of Patmos. For he not only saw a new heaven and a new earth, but he also "saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven." This is one of those many mansions of which the Savior spoke, as being in his Father's house, and which he was going to prepare for his disciples; and then he would come again and receive them to himself.

There was no more sea. The original earth had a sea; but we should gather from the account of the deluge that it was as described in Job (xxxviii. 8):—

"Who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth as if it had issued out of the womb?"

This meets the description given in Genesis, when it is said, "The fountains of the great deep were broken up." It is not only possible, but probable, that the sea may again be shut up with doors, and the dry land appear all over the globe. Josephus gives us, in his *discourse on hades*, the Hebrew idea, in language like this: "The sea shall not be without moisture; but it shall not be impossible for men to walk on it." This would indicate a shutting up of the sea in its original storehouse, and the whole earth be given to the service of man.

"Behold the tabernacle of God is with men." A tabernacle is a tent, or temporary dwelling. When God dwelt with Israel in the tabernacle, on the mercy

seat, it was not his permanent abode, but he tabernacled with them. This holy city, too, is merely his tent, and he shall *tabernacle* with them; not abandon the heaven of heavens, where his throne is, but he will often visit earth and make a temporary stay with his children here.

This glorious result was promised in the closing verses of Ezek. xxxvii.: "My tabernacle also shall be with them; yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people." So, also, God promised to Abraham and his seed the everlasting possession of the land; and he added, "I will be their God." Thus, in that heavenly country and city, will culminate all the promises made to Abraham and his seed, and to Christ and his saints, the members of his body, the church.

But who can conceive the infinite sum of blessedness expressed in the words, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes"? Then will be fulfilled the promise, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." Death no more, sorrow and crying no more, "neither shall there be any more pain." Well may the divine Spirit add, "For the former things are passed away." He who sits on the great white throne proclaims, "Behold, I make all things new!" It is not that he makes all new things; but makes old things new. It is not extinction, but renovation of the old earth.

And he said unto me, Write. Having seen and heard

the foregoing description and announcements, God himself commands his servant to write, because the words are literally true and faithful. They are not symbolical representations and descriptions of something entirely different, but the exact thing seen and stated.

Verses 6-8. "And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death."

The Alpha and Omega, to whom the inheritance of all things is given, here proclaims the destiny of the human race, the saint and the sinner. "I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely."

The overcomers. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things," as already described in the preceding verses. "I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

But next comes the sad fate of the ungodly. It is their lot, that while the overcomers inherit all the afore-described glory in the new heaven and new earth, to "have their part in the lake which burneth

with fire and brimstone; which is the second death." If the first is literal, why not the last-named doom?

Verse 9. "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither; I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife."

The promise of this angel to show John, "the *bride*, the Lamb's wife," was fulfilled by showing him the New Jerusalem in her glory, with her bridegroom king, and all her blessed inhabitants. We have a description of this city, Jerusalem, which is above, and is free, and is the mother of us all, in the fifty-fourth chapter of Isaiah. There she is told of her perpetual peace and security; and to her it is said, "Thy maker is thy husband; the God of the whole earth shall be called."

Verses 10-14. "And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; and had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: on the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."

When the harlot of chapter seventeen was to be exhibited, John was called by the same angel, or one of his fellows, who had the seven last plagues, and he carried him "in spirit into the wilderness." Now, when the bride of the Lamb is to be seen, it is not the wilderness into which he is carried *in spirit*, but to a great and high mountain, where nothing should obstruct the sight, and showed that great city, the holy Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven. This city is the bride of the Lamb; the saints, their children. (See Isa. liv. 5, 11-14.) No language can be more glowing, or present the picture of the city in more living beauty, than that which the Spirit has used. Her glory, God's glory. The rarest and most precious stones illustrate her radiant splendor. Her gates are twelve solid pearls; an angel porter keeps each gate, on each of which is inscribed the name of one of Israel's tribes.

The walls of the city rest on a twelvefold foundation, and each separate tier of foundation stones is garnished with precious gems; and inscribed on each foundation are the names of one of the twelve apostles.

Verses 15-18. "And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length, and the breadth, and the height

of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred *and forty and four* cubits, *according to* the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was *of* jasper: and the city *was* pure gold, like unto clear glass."

The angelic measurement of the city is given by the seer, as he saw it measured with the golden reed. Its form is a square. Its four sides are equal. Its dimensions are twelve thousand furlongs. This is, in all probability, its entire circumference; so that the diameter would be three hundred and seventy-five miles. Exceptions have been taken to this as a literal description of a city, because of the disproportionate form. "The length, breadth, and the *hight* of it are equal." Now, say the objectors, a city fifteen hundred miles long, and fifteen hundred miles wide, or three hundred and seventy-five miles long, wide, and high, would be such a monstrosity that the earth would be thrown from its orbit, and God would be under the necessity of performing a perpetual miracle in order to preserve its balance. But the difficulty is easily removed. "The length, breadth, and hight of it are *proportionate*," rather than *equal*. We are told expressly that the wall is "*one hundred and forty and four cubits*," or two hundred and twelve feet. This would be an *agreement of proportion* for the hight, rather than a *hight equal* to its length and breadth. On the whole, then, it is likely that the city is three

hundred and seventy-five miles square, and two hundred and twelve feet high, thus presenting a symmetrical appearance, an agreement of length, breadth, and height. *Isos*, rendered *equal*, is also used for *agreement*. (Mark xiv. 56, 59.)

While the twelve foundations were garnished with all manner of precious stones, and one of them was garnished with jasper, the wall itself was built of jasper alone. The city itself, that is, its buildings, were pure gold, like unto clear glass. It is such gold as mortal eyes have never yet beheld. The foundations of the wall are thus described. Truly, the gold of that city is good.

Verses 19, 20. "And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; the fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst."

The gates and streets are described as of surprising beauty, as we read in

Verse 21. "And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass."

The absence of a temple in this city is a striking characteristic, showing that God will be worshiped in

himself; "as God now dwells in the spiritual church, his temple (Gr. *naos*, shrine; 1 Cor. iii. 17; vi. 19), so the church, when perfected, shall dwell in him as her 'temple' (*naos*, the same Gr.). As the church was 'his sanctuary' (Ps. cxiv. 2), so he is to be their sanctuary. (Ez. xi. 15.) Means of grace shall cease when the end of grace is come. Church ordinances shall give place to the God of ordinances. Uninterrupted, immediate, direct communion with him and the Lamb shall supersede intervening ordinances." — *Faussett*.

Verses 22, 23. "And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."

So luminous will be the glory of God in the holy city, that the light of the sun will pale before it, as do the stars when the king of day rises above the horizon; or as the sun of midday did when Christ appeared to Saul of Tarsus, on his way to Damascus. The glory of God and the Lamb there will be one perpetual, unbroken day. But this is not said of the earth in general. For while it continues, day and night shall not cease.

Verse 24. "And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it."

The nations of them that are saved. It has been argued from this phrase, that nations in the flesh, heathen nations, who never had the gospel, will be saved in the day of wrath, and repeople the earth after the saints shall have been removed from it to heaven, their everlasting home. As to that, it would seem that there will be no such nations then; for before the end comes "the gospel must first be preached among all nations." (Mark xiii. 10.)

Then, again, it is not *saved nations*, who shall walk in the light of the holy city, but "nations of them," that is, composed of them "that are saved." When the Lord writeth up the people, makes his registration — he will count that — "this man was born there;" "and of Zion it will be said, this and that man was born in her." So the saints will be divided off into nationalities, according as the Lord shall see fit to apportion them; and each nation will have its king under the King of kings. The very idea of such a title implies kings in his empire. These kings and nations will bring their choicest gifts and treasures, and lay them at Immanuel's feet; just as all the kings of the earth did in the days of Solomon, the son of David. (2 Chron. ix. 22-24.)

Thus "his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth." "All kings shall bow down before him, and all nations shall serve him." Not in a temporal millennium, wherein, if

established, "flesh and blood" will "inherit the kingdom of God," but is a state of immortality and everlasting blessedness, as we have endeavored to set forth. This is illustrated in the closing verses of the chapter.

Verses 25-27. "And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE RIVER AND TREE OF LIFE.

Verses 1-3. "And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner of* fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:"

In the new-made earth, at sight of which "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy," "the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there he placed the man whom

he had formed." In the midst of the garden he planted two trees — the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. That tree of life was to conserve life, so that even in sin it was needful that man should be kept from it lest he should eat and live for ever. To prevent this, man was driven from the garden to till the earth for a livelihood; for the ground was cursed for his sake. So far as we know, that tree of life has been seen by no human eye since Adam left the garden. That garden, the *Septuagint*, the Greek translation of the old Testament, always renders *paradise*. That *paradise* Christ speaks of in his letter to the Angel of the Church of Ephesus, as having in the midst of it still "the tree of life." "I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." We find it again in the New Jerusalem. The New Jerusalem, then, is "the paradise of God." The fifty-fourth chapter of Isaiah speaks of that garden as forsaken for a small moment, but with everlasting mercies restored. It is not unreasonable, in the light of that chapter, to suppose that where the garden of Eden was, the New Jerusalem will be. Out of that garden went a river. "And he," the angel who promised to show him the bride, the Lamb's wife, "showed me a pure river of water of life."

The river and tree are again associated. In the midst of the street and of the river, *ἐν μέσῳ τῆς ὁδοῦ καὶ τοῦ ποταμοῦ*,

"*Hither and hither*, the tree of life." That is, the river meanders along the side of the street; and in the midst, between the street and river, the tree of life grows, bearing monthly fruit.

Earth, made new, shall have its *paradise restored* with its "tree of life" and "river" in the midst, accessible to all its blessed citizens. What will be the need of healing leaves where no sorrow, pain, or death can enter, it is not easy to understand. The Greek *theropia* is defined, service, aid, help, attendance, and by implication, relief, healing, cure. The most easy and natural rendering of the word, here, would be — service. "The leaves of the tree were for the service of the nations." What service, that day will reveal.

When Adam sinned, God said to him, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it," &c. "Thorns, briers, and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee." This shall be known no more. Toil and sweat to attain sustenance will be at an end. What the service shall be which the saints will render their Lord in the holy city, is another thing we may not fully understand. One service will be holy worship and adoration, as with the palm-bearers of Revelation, seventh chapter. They shall see God's face, and "his name be on their foreheads." Thus all are sealed.

Verses 4, 5. "And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be

no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever."

They shall reign for ever and ever. Such is the duration of Christ's reign as given Dan. vii. 13, 14; Luke i. 30-33; Rev. xi. 15, 16. So, also, is it the period allotted to the saints of the Most High. (Dan. vii. 18, 27.)

There is to be a sort of preparatory reign of a thousand years before the final execution of judgment on the wicked; but that event shall not terminate their reign in a state of glorious immortality, with Christ their living head.

It is with this assurance of an everlasting reign the Apocalyptic visions close. What remains of the book, from verse six to the end, is general instruction and admonition. The general declaration of the angel who showed these things to John, one of the seven angels, is as in

Verse 6. "And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done."

Could we be assured more plainly than in these words that what he had showed and told to John were true and faithful words? Then let us receive them as such, and believe that "the Lord God of the spirits of

the prophets sent his angel," a fellow-servant of John, "to show unto his servants things which must shortly be done"—*en tachei, done with celerity*, as it was promised in Ch. i. 1. As then promised it had been done.

Verses 7-10. "Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book. And I John saw these things, and heard *them*. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See *thou* do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God. And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand."

The inclination to worship the revealing angel still pressed upon the seer, so that again he fell at his feet to worship him, and was again positively forbidden to do it. And again the angel declared himself to be John's fellow-servant, and the fellow-servant of the prophets. That the New Jerusalem will be a literal city as is here described we firmly believe. Abraham looked for it; and it is promised to the overcomers. (Heb. xi. 10, 16; Rev. iii. 12.)

Those who insist that the Apocalypse is a sealed book will do well to consider the tenth verse, where John was positively instructed not to seal the sayings of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. And those who have carefully read the foregoing

pages and kept the connection and bearings of the various parts will be constrained to the conclusion that the book is as plain as any unfulfilled prophecy can well be.

Verses 11. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still."

When the "mystery of God is finished," this will be true, for that will be when the seventh angel sounds, "and the time of the dead" comes "that they should be judged." Then the Master of the house will have shut the door, and all calls for entrance will be vain. If mercy is ever found, it must be before that day.

Verses 12, 13. "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last."

Still the Lord declares the suddenness of his coming to bring his reward for every one. For, as before remarked, *tachy* signifies suddenly, as well as quickly.

Verses 14, 15. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

The fate of both saints and sinners is here set forth: the former in the city, the latter outside, with no possibility of entering within the walls.

Verse 16. "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star."

Jesus here declares that he, as the *revealer*, sent his angel to testify these *things*. It is therefore the Apocalypse of *things*, rather than his person, as the whole book shows. He is the root from which David sprang, and therefore David's Lord. He is also his offspring according to the flesh, and therefore sole heir to his throne; and God will give it him according to his frequent promise. The morning star is early rising, and bright. Jesus first rose from the dead to immortality and glory, the harbinger of endless day.

Verse 17. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

This invitation is sometimes interpreted as the call of the Spirit and church for Christ to come. But evidently the invitation is to come to the water of life, "whosoever will." It is parallel with Isa. lv., and of the same import.

Verses 18, 19. "For I testify unto every man that

heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book."

The fearful maledictions of these verses on those who take from or add to the words of this book have constantly influenced the author in the preparation of these pages; and he has sought in each verse and word to indicate the exact mind of the Spirit as expressed in his own words; nor dare he do otherwise.

Verses 20, 21. "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly: Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

The book is the Revelation of Jesus Christ. He is the *testifier* of these things, and not the *testified*, or *manifested*. And again, he testifies of himself, "*I come suddenly.*" This is the import of all the New Testament representations of his coming. "*As a thief.*" "*When ye think not.*" "*As the lightning,*" &c. All these expressions indicate *suddenness* rather than *soon after the warning*. Thus, as the Old Testament closes with a curse, the New Testament closes with a BENEDICTION. "The grace of our Lord Jesus

Christ be with you all." "Amen" — the confirming closing word: *so it shall be.*

The seer adds, — and let us all live in a spirit to join with him and say, — "Even so come, Lord Jesus." The end of pain, sorrow, and death, the beginning of all blessedness, the eternal union of all the good in his presence and glory — who that believes it can but join the apostolic prayer?

There is no book in the Bible so commended to us as the Apocalypse. In the seven letters, seven times does Jesus repeat concerning this book, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches." It opens with a blessing on the reader and hearer of the words. The visions close with the assurance that "these sayings are faithful and true," "These words are true and faithful." An awful guard is placed to defend its integrity, by denouncing the most terrible penalty on any who add to or take from these words.

In the spirit of all these words this work has been prepared, in the belief that there is not a more literal book in all the sacred volume. Interpreted on this principle, the harmony is complete, and a child can understand its import. All attempt to interpret it on any other principle makes confusion worse confounded. According to the obvious import of the Apocalypse, terrible scenes await this world, and we all need a

place of refuge, which can only be found in the Lord Jesus Christ. To him let us flee, and trusting his word, hope to "escape all these things which shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man" in peace.

With much prayer this work has been prepared, and in the same spirit it is now sent forth on its mission of calling attention to these solemn truths, and opening the way for the sincere inquirer to understand "what the Spirit saith to the churches;" firmly believing the book to be what its title indicates, "A Complete Harmony of Daniel and the Apocalypse."

The work follows the principles of interpretation adopted by the primitive church. The year-day theory is as positive an *innovation* on the faith of the early fathers from the days of the apostles downward for hundreds of years, as the doctrine of the world's conversion and temporal millennium, and is part and parcel of that theory. If it be said that we have more light now than they had, the ready answer is, that while Daniel's predictions were sealed up till the time of the end, it is not true of the Apocalypse. "Seal not the sayings of this book," was the command of Christ to the seer; and so it has ever remained open, with the reiterated injunction, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches." "Blessed is he that readeth," has been ever true. The obvious and literal is the true reading of the book. And all that is symbolical is either called a *sign*, or

the symbol is interpreted by divine authority. In all other cases John was shown the "things which must come to pass." All divinely authorized interpretations are literal and final, and need no amendment. And for an interpreter to assume to be wiser than God, so that when he declares the "great dragon" to be "that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan," it savors much of both adding to and taking from these words to say it is a mistake, it represents the Roman empire. And when the angel says (Rev. xvii.), "I will show thee the mystery of the woman," &c.; she "is that great CITY which reigneth over the kings of the earth;" it is rather assuming for any man to say that is a mistake; she is the Roman hierarchy, or church of Rome. "Let God be true, and every man a liar." His word will stand, whatever becomes of our interpretations.

THE TWENTY-FOURTH OF MATTHEW.

THE elements for the interpretation of this important chapter are embodied in the foregoing Harmony; but that the reader may have the import of it concisely before him, we give a synopsis by itself.

The three questions proposed by the disciples, "When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? were

in their minds connected together as occurring at one period. Christ did not correct the impression. Did they think rightly? Can that prediction, There shall not be one stone of the temple left on another which shall not be thrown down, have been fulfilled, while, as recent research proves, a wall of the temple eighty or ninety feet high still remains? Will it be likely ever to fall until the coming of Christ? Probably not. The end of the *aioon* — age, or world — is the same as in Matt. xiii. 39, "the harvest is the end of the world;" and as in Matt. xxviii. 20, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." This all evangelical Christians understand will occur in connection with the second advent.

Christ taught them, first, what would not be the sign of his coming. 1. Many saying, I am Christ, deceiving many. 2. Wars and rumors of wars. "But the end is not yet." 3. Famines, pestilence, and earthquakes in divers places. These are the beginning of the "pangs," or "sorrows," of travail. These are what we are now witnessing on a large scale. 4. Great persecutions of the saints. These have culminated in the slaughter of seventy or eighty millions, since Christ. 5. Iniquity shall abound. This we see everywhere. 6. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations." And so it is going forth in a manner unknown in former times, even to the ends of the earth.

This is an unmistakable sign of the nearness of the end, for when this is done, "then shall the end come." This is the first positive sign of the end given in the chapter.

Verses 15-28 refer to the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, and the consequent tribulation. The connecting word *therefore*, — "when ye **THEREFORE** shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place," — connects verse fifteen with verse fourteen, and the end of the world. They belong to one age. If we turn to Daniel xi. 31, to find what he said of this abomination, we find that it supplants the daily temple service of the Jews, and is placed in the temple, or, sanctuary, by the last king who reigns in the north, the east, and in the glorious holy mountain, Zion — the king who reigns at the time of the end, and who shall come to his end, and none shall help him; the king whose reign is cotemporary with the standing up of Michael. That abomination is a god whom he — this king, — "shall acknowledge and increase with glory." If he reigns in the glorious land, and sets his palace on Mount Zion, as the Word declares he will, why not his god be in the temple on Mount Moriah? There is no ground, comparing Matt. xxiv. 15 and Dan. xi., for calling the *abomination of desolation* the Roman ensigns placed in the temple by Titus, A. D. 70. For the temple was burnt as soon as Titus took the city. But both in and around the city these

ensigns had floated for years, and did so when Christ uttered the prediction: that was nothing new, nor did the Jews regard it; for they preferred Cæsar to Jesus. But this abomination is to be IN the *holy place* — IN the temple.

It is agreed among all expositors that Daniel ix. 27, is referred to in this text. The *Septuagint*, from which Christ read and quoted, reads, "And upon the temple there shall be an abomination of the desolations." Christ's use of nearly the identical words confirms the correctness of the Septuagint translation.

Dan. ix. 26 predicts the overthrow of Jerusalem by the Romans, under Titus, after the death of Christ; and the continued desolation to the close of "the times of the Gentiles," or "end of the war." It was to this Christ referred when he said, "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains," &c. The disciples did observe this sign and flee, and were saved. But they fled before the siege of Jerusalem, and while the Roman army was withdrawn. But the sign here referred to — the abomination of desolation — is to be IN the holy place, not compassing the city. It is foretold Dan. ix. 27, not ix. 26. The two are distinct signals — and at different times — the former at Jerusalem's destruction, A. D. 70; the other under the last earthly king, described by Daniel the

prophet. The Christians of Jerusalem and Judea are to do, under this sign, what those of the same country did eighteen hundred years ago — “flee,” when they see it. Then they had time to go deliberately, and no great haste was enjoined on them. For they had months, from the time Vespasian retired from Judea before Titus returned. But in Matthew it is different. The haste is so great, that those who would escape must stop for nothing, but flee with the utmost speed. If any is on the house-top, he is not to come down, but flee to the wall over the conjoined roofs. If he is in the field, he is not to go back for his clothes. Such are the points of difference between the two events and the two flights. Then they can not be identical as usually understood.

The great tribulation of Matthew and the time of trouble of Daniel are identical, and are produced by one cause — the doings of the king whose “arms” take away the daily sacrifice, and “place the abomination which maketh desolate.” The time of the tribulation, for the sake of the elect, shall be short that they may not all fall as martyrs. The appointed time is twelve hundred and ninety days. (Dan. xii. 11.) It may be that these days will be cut short, for the sake of the elect, and be less.

Verse 29. “Immediately after the tribulation of those days.” There is not to be a century, nor half a one, from their ending before the signs here given

shall come. These are the events of the sixth seal (Rev. vi. 12-17); and the appearing of the judgment throne is the "sign of the Son of Man in heaven," and all these immediately follow the close of the great tribulation. The saints will then know their position, as it is written (Dan. xii. 10, 11), "Many shall be purified and made white and tried." This is by the great tribulation. "But the wicked shall do wickedly" during this time of trial. "And none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand." And the appearance of the sign to close the tribulation is what will give them light on the subject, and break the seal placed on the book of Daniel. The thirteen hundred and thirty-five days of Dan. xii. 12 constitute the period to elapse from the sign of the Son of Man to the time when "they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the one end of heaven to the other." Then will Daniel and all the saints stand in their lot.

ANTICHRIST.

The characteristics of Antichrist are given by John in his First Epistle (1 John ii. 22): "Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son."

This is his first characteristic. It was in reference to this that Jesus said to the Jews, "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not," that is, as the Christ. "If another shall come in his own name," denying the Father and Son, "him ye will receive," that is, as the Christ. Such a one will certainly come and be thus received by the Jews as their Christ.

The church of Rome and all her popes, from the beginning, have confessed, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in his only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord." Then they are not Antichrist, and can not be. It is true that the pope claims to be God's vicerent on earth, and God on earth in the sense of a vicerent, and also Christ's vicar. But both vicar and vicerent imply the existence and supremacy of those whom they represent, and is a confession of subordination.

John's next characteristic of Antichrist is found Ch. iv. 3: "And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it shall come, and even now already is it in the world." The spirit of Antichrist is the Jewish spirit, which confesses not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. It existed then, and exists now, and will result in the acceptance of another.

The third characteristic is found 2 John vii.: "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who con-

feels not Jesus Christ — *erkomenon* — COMING in the flesh. This is a decoiver and an Antichrist." Then the Antichrist will not confess that Jesus Christ is *coming* in flesh. The world is now full of that spirit. Notwithstanding it is written that his flesh did not see corruption, and that he showed his fleshly body to his disciples, and said, "Handle me and see, for a spirit has not flesh and bones as ye see me have," still many bearing the Christian name deny that he now exists in flesh, or will come again in flesh. Are they Antichrist? But it is not either the popes or church of Rome who fail to confess him as coming in the flesh to judge the living and dead. But there is an apostasy foretold by Paul (1 Thess. ii.), which is to precede the revelation of the man of sin, and the second advent, which will deny the Father and the Son; and springing out of this apostasy will grow that man of sin, that wicked, and exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God (in Jerusalem), showing himself that he is God. He is the one who will come in his own name, and be received by that people whose fathers rejected Jesus, saying, "We have no king but Cæsar." He will deny the Father and the Son. He is to be the ruling power of the world at the second advent of Christ, "whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy by the brightness of his coming." He is the willful king. (Dan. xi. 36.)